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Social movements, YouTube and political activism in authoritarian countries: a comparative analysis of political change in Pakistan, Tunisia & Egypt.

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SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, YOUTUBE AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN AUTHORITARIAN COUNTRIES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL CHANGE IN PAKISTAN, TUNISIA & EGYPT

by

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PH.D. THESIS

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To Our Parents: Mr. & Mrs. Malik Rashid Ahmed; Mr. & Mrs. S. M. Zia

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the role of social media in political activism in authoritarian societies, using as case studies the use of YouTube as an alternative channel of communication and resistance during the political crises in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. I studied Pakistan because it is one of the few majority Muslim countries in which social media were part of the media mix during the mass uprisings that led to the overthrow of the regime of military leader, General Pervez Musharraf in 2007. Tunisia and Egypt were chosen because these two countries are seen as the iconic nations of the Arab Spring 2011. The study argues that the term "Arab Spring" itself limits the scope of ongoing online and offline political uprisings in the Muslim World, which is spreading beyond the geographical boundaries of the Middle East.

The investigation uses "social movements" as defined and theorized by Hirschman (1970), Lohmann (1994), Olson (1965), and Tarrow (1994; 1998) as its theoretical foundation, in order to describe and explain how YouTube was part of the information activism of the social movements that sprang up during the revolutions in Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt. A comparative methodological approach enables me to analyze the "most viewed" YouTube videos of political protests in the three countries.

By examining a purposive sample of 60 most viewed protest-related YouTube videos, the study explores how these videos served as a "voice," (alternative channels of communication) when the authoritarian governments controlled all the media in the three countries. Using quantitative content analysis and thematic analysis approaches, the study investigates YouTube's role and content during Pakistan's political crisis of 2007, and compares it with that platform's role as an alternative avenue of communication, as well

as its content in the 2011 political uprising in Tunisia and Egypt, which are the core of the Arab Spring in North Africa.

Eight research questions were asked for this investigation. These questions were derived from Hirschman (1970), Lohmann (1994), Tarrow (1998), and Perlmutter's (1998) works. Issues that were investigated in these questions include: identifying the cultural and ideological frames used in the most viewed videos of each revolution, YouTube videos as "informational cascades," *Al-Jazeera*'s role as "informational cascade," YouTube videos as a "Voice," and the most iconic images of each revolution.

The findings of these research questions suggest that in the absence of traditional media sources, YouTube can serve as an alternative platform of communication and dissent. The study finds that the social movements in the three countries (The Lawyers' Movement of 2007 in Pakistan, the so-called Jasmine Revolution of Tunisia (2010), and the Arab Spring of Egypt 2011) utilized YouTube as an alternate channel of communication to disseminate information on political protests against the dictatorial regimes for purposes of promoting resistance.

The visual content analysis of these videos revealed that the YouTube videos of political protests utilized common religious and national ideologies as a part of cultural and ideological frames to spread the narratives of political protests online.

The findings of this study support that the most viewed videos contributed to serve as informational cascades for the observers (YouTube viewers) of these protest-related videos. The findings also highlight that the pan-Arabic TV channel *Al-Jazeera* utilized YouTube as an alternative platform to disseminate its protest-related videos, particularly when the channel was banned in the three countries.

The visual content analysis of the most viewed videos of protests suggest that social movements in Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt used YouTube to amplify their voice against corruption, unemployment, and authoritarianism in the three countries.

The findings of this dissertation identify that three images (one from each country) were treated as the icons of outrage in the 60 most viewed protest-related videos. These icons of outrage include the images of Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation (Tunisia), torture-disfigured face of Khaled Said (Egypt), and the arrest of Pakistani Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudry.

Based on its findings, the dissertation argues that the ongoing political struggle in Muslim-majority countries is a much bigger phenomenon than the "Arab Spring." This study also makes a strong case that Pakistan experienced online informational activism long before the Arab Spring of 2011. Since political communication in Pakistan is a relatively under-researched field, academic archives do not provide sufficient information on the role and emergence of social media in the country, including how the new modes of digital communication serve as alternative channels of political activism against dictatorship. This dissertation intends to fill this void.

The study also contributes to the existing literature on communication, social movements and political activism, which is predominantly specific to Western settings. Since this study applies Western approaches of social movements to non-Western settings, it helps to explicate the applicability of such approaches to non-Western societies and contexts. Furthermore, it is important to understand the role of social media as alternative channels of communication in closed, authoritarian societies where the traditional media serve only the interests of the ruling elites. In addition, the study helps

to explain how the increasingly popular social media, e.g. YouTube, are contributing to civil liberties by challenging the authoritarian regimes of the Muslim World.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The 2011 uprisings in the Middle East, commonly referred to as the "Arab Spring," are widely seen and celebrated as a turning point in the history of the Muslim World (Ghannam 2011; Harb 2011; Mendel 2011; Mir 2011; Ryan 2011). These political uprisings that have shaken several countries in the Muslim World started from Tunisia in 2010, when a Tunisian street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi, doused himself with gasoline and self immolated in protest against poor economic conditions and police brutality (Harb 2011; Mir 2011). This incident paved the way for online and offline political protests in 18 Arab countries in North Africa and the Middle East (Ghannam 2011), and points toward a new era of social movements and protests in the digital age.

The Problem

This dissertation argues that the term "Arab Spring" is unnecessarily limiting in scope because of its tendency to interpret the political insurrections that have taken place in many Muslim-majority countries in the context of the Arabic-speaking Middle East. In fact, the ongoing political struggles in Muslim-majority countries are a much bigger phenomenon than the "Arab Spring." As a result, for purposes of simplicity, the study will use the term "Muslim World" instead of the "Arab World." By "Muslim World," the study means all the countries that are members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Currently, there are 57 OIC member states including the 22 states and territories of the Arab League (OIC 2013; The World Bank 2013). The total population of the Muslim World is 2 billion

with the highest percentages (62%) in the Asia-Pacific region (World Muslim Population 2013). According to the statistics, provided by Pew Research Center and the World Bank, more Muslims live in India and Pakistan (344 million combined) than in the entire Middle East-North Africa region (317 million) (Desilver 2013; The World Bank 2013).

Numerous academic and non-academic writers praise social media as the sole driver of the Arab awakening. In other words, the Arab Spring is considered as the direct outcome of the popularity of the Internet and digital media in the region. However, little scholarly research is available that helps us understand what type of content is available on these alternative media platforms. Likewise, it is hard to find literature that acknowledges the fact that political uprisings similar to the Arab Spring had actually taken place or were going on well before the Tunisian revolution. Pakistan, the second-largest Muslim country in terms of population (180 million), is an example of a country where such political activism took place as early as 2007 (Hashim 2012; Ricchiardi 2012; Desilver 2013). In his most recent book, *The Dispensable Nation*, Middle East scholar and foreign policy advisor to the White House, Vali Nasr, states that those who believe that the ongoing political and economic crisis of Pakistan could produce a "Pakistan Spring," are actually mistaken. In fact, "Pakistan had its spring in 2008 when its lawyers, media, students, and civil society joined hands to send General Musharraf packing" (Nasr 2013, p. 92).

In order to get a clearer picture of political activism in the Muslim World outside of the Middle East, we need to investigate the scope of political activism in Muslim-majority countries beyond the Arab Spring of 2011. It is also important to determine whether the social media were the sole factors that served as alternative channels of communication during the political uprisings in the Muslim World or whether there might be other factions

that need to be explored. For example, the Qatar-based pan-Arabic television network *Al-Jazeera* was seen as a channel of revolutions during the political uprisings in countries with Muslim majorities (Harb 2011). A number of media scholars believe that social media, especially YouTube, not only served as a platform for the protesters, but also benefited *Al-Jazeera* since the Arab TV network could upload and disseminate videos of political uprisings online (Ghannam 2011; Harb 2011; Eko 2012).

Thus, this study on the content and place of YouTube as an alternative channel of communication during political protests will contribute to our understanding of social uprisings in Muslim-majority countries, commonly known as the Muslim World, with a focus on the early place of this networking site during the Pakistani, Egyptian, and Tunisian political crises. The study explores how this political activism is related to the broader concept of social movements. The term "social movements" refers to "group actions" in which individuals or organizations join a collective action to achieve a common goal (Olson 1965; Hirschman 1970; Skocpol 1979; Jenkins 1983; Tilly 1992; Tarrow 1998). For this investigation, however, the term "social movements" should be interpreted as "contentious" (Tarrow 1998) political uprisings and mass protests in the three countries. Furthermore, the term networked "social media" refers to Internet-based human communication that involves audiences as the active producers, consumers, and disseminators of content online (Burgess and Green 2009; Green and Jenkins 2011). Two scholars, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (p.61). Within these perspectives on social media, this investigation will treat YouTube as a social media tool, which is very popular among the elite of Pakistan,

Tunisia, and Egypt. Some scholars like Bennett and Segerberg (2011) believe that these "emergent social media networks often achieve impressive results, from toppling corrupt regimes to putting pressure on governments to consider popular feelings" (p.5). This dissertation makes no such claims. However, the content analysis of YouTube videos in this study may contribute to our understanding of this medium as part of the "cascade of information," against authoritarian regimes, as well as an alternative source of communication during these crises.

This investigation explores the content of the "most viewed" YouTube videos (Green and Jenkins 2011) of political protests related to the political uprisings in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. These spreadable videos are most viewed and circulated. The later part of this chapter provides a detailed discussion of the term "most viewed" videos and why they are important for this dissertation.

Why Pakistan, Egypt & Tunisia?

Since this dissertation is a comparative analysis of YouTube content in political uprisings in three countries (Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia), I will define the terms, "comparative" and "case studies" in this chapter. This will clarify why I have chosen to study these three countries when political uprisings like the Arab Spring were actually taking place at a much broader scale.

The term "comparative" in comparative politics itself refers to a methodological choice concerned with macro units of analysis. A simplified definition of comparative methods would be a study of cross-country, cross-cultural or cross-society analysis (Lerner 1958; Skocpol 1979; Skocpol and American Council of Learned Societies. 1979; Tilly 1990). Comparative case analyses are known as path-breaking and exploratory designs, which

continue to serve the discipline when other conventional means of research (quantitative and experimental designs) are not enough to understand and explain a phenomenon (Przeworski and Teune 1970; Douglas 1998; Hawkins 2009).

Case Studies. Some scholars define a case study analysis as the study of a rare historical occurrence (Gerring 2004), while others argue that an intensive study of a relatively bounded topic can be considered as a case study as long as it can be linked to a larger phenomenon by using a keyword (Douglas 1998; Gerring 2004; Hawkins 2009). For example, the political protests of 2011 in Egypt can be considered as a bounded topic, and it can be connected to a larger phenomenon using the keyword "Social Movements." A case study has two important components: spatial and temporal—thus any comparison using a case study approach is based on either a spatial unit (country) or over time such as day, month, year (Hawkins 2009).

Furthermore, we choose a case study analysis in international communication research in order to know more about rare historical occurrences, theory generation, for in-depth analysis, finding causal pathways and expanding our knowledge about other countries and cultures. Thus the utility of the case study method is contextual (Gerring 2004). In other words, case studies are used when little is known about something or our existing knowledge in the field is very limited. This approach helps us find causal pathways, which should not be mistaken for causation (Przeworski and Teune 1970; Hawkins 2009). This study argues that when it comes to Pakistan, little is known about the country's media landscape, and the academic archives provide little to no information on the recent political crisis of Pakistan that occurred before the so-called Arab Spring. The following paragraphs will further

elaborate this point and how these three case studies will bridge this gap in the existing scholarship.

My cross-country analysis is informed by Bertaux (1990), Teune (1990) and Gerring (2004). I have chosen to study the political uprisings in these three countries for multiple reasons. First, since Pakistan, the world's second largest Muslim population country, had witnessed online political activism long before the so-called Arab Spring in 2011, this case should be taken into context while studying political uprisings in the Muslim World. In November 2007 when President Musharraf imposed a state of emergency in the country and blocked the entire broadcast media, "[o]nline media were used as an organizing tool during the Lawyer's Movement and protests against President Musharraf in 2007 and 2008. Information about demonstrations was disseminated through e-mail lists, SMS, and YouTube" (Ricchiardi 2012, p. 15).

The more than 10- year rule of Musharraf, the military dictator who had toppled former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government in a bloodless military coup, could not withstand online and offline political protests that erupted in response to President Musharraf's decision to sack Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudry (Rashid 2008; Arif 2010; Lieven and ebrary Inc. 2011). The independent-minded chief justice was removed from office after he refused to support President Musharraf's re-election (Muralidharan, Dixit et al. 2008; Hashim 2012). Furthermore, Chaudry had "irked the government by pressing it to provide information on the whereabouts of 400 'disappeared' people, who have been secretly held by Pakistan's intelligence agencies" (Wilkinson 2007, p. 1). These factors led to the dismissal of Iftikhar Chaudry that resulted in a "series of bloody protests [all over the country, especially, in front of the President House, Islamabad] and edged the country toward a constitutional

crisis" (Wilkinson 2007, p. 2). These protests against President Musharraf were joined by thousands of lawyers, civil society organizations, political and religious parties, and other people from all walks of life (Arif 2011). Despite the government's crackdown on these protesters, President Musharraf could not contain the ongoing protests in front of the President House. Besides providing 24/7 news coverage to the protesters, the newly born private media, particularly TV news channels, started becoming more critical of the military regime and demanded the restoration of the constitution and democracy in the country (Ricchiardi 2012). This led President Musharraf to take extreme measures by shutting down the entire broadcast media in the country (BBC News 2010). Thus, to control the content of private television channels, the government banned all the private news channels for more than a month in November 2007 (Freedom House 2010). The journalists were also threatened with arrests and punishment if they tried to cover any political protests against the government or the military establishment (Freedom House 2010).

It is pertinent to mention here that military interventions and bans on media freedom were not something unusual for Pakistan as the country has witnessed many such examples since its inception in 1947. However, the only factor that made a difference in peoples' struggle against the dictatorship is that they now had an alternative medium—the Internet—to express their disapproval of the regime. Thus, in the absence of traditional media, people started using networked social media including blogs, Facebook and YouTube as online and offline (street protests) informational activism for the first time in the country's history (Khalid 2008; BBC News 2010).

Second, it is widely believed that the political uprisings in the Muslim World started in Tunisia when a Tunisian street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi, doused himself with gasoline

and self immolated in a protest against poor economic conditions and police brutality. Bouazizi's protest suicide got national and global attention when someone posted the cellphone-recorded video of the "Tunisian burning man" on Facebook. The Arabic channel, *Al-Jazeera*, "picked up Ali Bouazizi's footage from the man's Facebook page, and transmitted it to its transnational Arabic satellite audience that same evening" (Eko 2012, p. 130). Thus it is important to use the Tunisian political uprising as a case study for this investigation.

Third, Tunisia's next-door neighbor, Egypt was the second-most important country to go through political uprisings after the Tunisian revolution. Also, in October 1993, Egypt was the first-ever country with Internet access in the Arab World, and all other countries in the region followed the lead (Rasha 2010). The existing scholarship on political activism argues that the success of the Tunisian social movement and revolution paved the way for the Egyptian revolution. That's why Tunisia and Egypt are seen as the icons of the Arab Spring 2011 uprising.

Fourth, Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt, are comparable on a number of variables ranging from culture, religion, and politics to their geographic and economic similarities (Eko 2012). For example, the three countries under investigation are members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and are Muslim-majority countries. In Tunisia, the population is 98% Muslim, while 97% of the population of Pakistan is Muslim, and 90% of Egyptians are Muslim (CIA Factbook 2013). Also, the three countries have a history of dictatorial regimes "led by long-serving authoritarian military leaders turned civilian presidents (Gen. Ben Ali of Tunisia was president for twenty-four years, Air Chief Marshall Hosni Mubarak was president for almost thirty years" (Eko 2012, p. 133), and Pakistan

witnessed more than thirty-two years of interrupted dictatorial regimes starting from General Ayub Khan (1958-1971), followed by General Zia-ul-Haq (1977-1988), and President Musharraf, from 1999 to 2008 (Lieven and ebrary Inc. 2011; Hashim 2012).

Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt all have a history of government-controlled mass media. The mass media in these three countries were subject to strict governmental control at the time of the uprisings. Also, Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt have identical economic conditions, with burgeoning populations, and rising unemployment among educated youth.

What is YouTube?

Founded in February 2005, Google's YouTube—*Broadcast Yourself* is the second-largest search engine in the world, and is one of the most popular social networking sites in Muslim majority countries including Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt (Qualman 2012). YouTube's "Arabic music videos attract millions of viewers" (Ghannam 2011, p. 6). According to statistics provided by YouTube, more than 1 billion unique users visit YouTube each month, and over 6 billion hours of videos are watched each month on YouTube. The site is not only popular among viewers, but it is equally famous among the producers of YouTube content. In fact, 100 hours of videos are uploaded to YouTube every minute. Furthermore, according to YouTube statistics, 70% of YouTube traffic comes from outside the United States. YouTube's global reach is evident from the fact that the site is localized in 56 countries and has content in 61 languages. In 2011, YouTube had more than 1 trillion views or around 140 views for every person on Earth (YouTube Stats 2013).

Since most of the amateur videos on YouTube are created and uploaded using smartphones, the statistics on YouTube's use via smartphones are relevant. Google claims that more than 25% of global YouTube views come from mobile devices. Also, 3 hours of

video are uploaded each minute to YouTube from mobile devices. YouTube is available on 350 million mobile devices around the world. Just like smartphones, YouTube's popularity has a direct connection to other social media sites such Facebook and Twitter. According to YouTube statistics, 500 hours of YouTube videos are watched every minute on Facebook, and more than 700 YouTube videos are shared on Twitter each minute. In addition, every week 100 million people take a social action on YouTube such as likes, shares, and comments (YouTube Stats 2013).

Why YouTube?

Like Marshall McLuhan's claim that the medium is the message (McLuhan and Fiore 1967), many scholars of digital media technology also believe that the "design of a social technology can greatly determine the kinds of actions that people may coordinate through it" (Bennett and Segerberg 2011, p. 34). Thus, my choice to study YouTube over the other forms of social media is based on the objectives of this investigation. Before discussing why I have decided to use YouTube to study social media's role as an alternative channel of communication in the political uprisings in Muslim-majority countries, let's discuss some of the statistical facts about the penetration and popularity of the Internet as a new medium of communications not only in the Muslim World, but worldwide. According to recent estimates, the number of Internet users worldwide exceeded 2 billion in 2010, which is one third of the world's population of 6.9 billion (Reuters 2010; Internet World Stats 2013). It may be noted that in 2010 alone, 226 million new users joined the online world, out of which "more than two thirds are from developing countries" (BBC 2010), and Asia remains at the top among Internet users with 44.8% of world's share (Internet World Stats 2013).

Based on survey reports, the numbers of Arabic-speaking Internet users are between 45 to 60 million. This number is predicted to increase to 100 million by 2015 (Arab Knowledge Report 2009; Ghannam 2011). According to a report released in 2012, in the Muslim world, the "United Arab Emirates has the highest penetration rate for fixed (wired) broadband connectivity — around 10 per cent. Qatar ranks second in the region, with a rate of 8.2 per cent, followed by Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. Lebanon and Tunisia have been able to take advantage of their relatively high fixed-telephone penetration levels to roll out DSL" (ITU News 2012). The popularity of social media in the Muslim World started with blogging. For example, "[i]n 2009, the Arab region had 35,000 active blogs and 40,000 by late 2010" (Ghannam 2011, p. 5). This trend of blogging is now shifting toward other forms of social media such as YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. For each day in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), "there are 100 million Google searches, 36,000 new Facebook users, 100 million YouTube videos are played, and an hour's video is uploaded to YouTube every minute" (Gulf.com 2013). It is estimated that the figure of 90 million Internet users in MENA are estimated to reach 413 million by 2015 (Gulf.com 2013). Similarly, in the majority of the countries in the Muslim World, online news seekers outnumber those who seek offline news sources. For example, "the number of Facebook users alone, about 17 million in the Arab world, have already surpassed the 14 million copies of newspapers sold in the region" (Ghannam 2011, p. 12). Despite this encouraging trend of the Internet penetration in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), discriminatory Internet-related laws and regulations remains the biggest challenge in the region. A thorough discussion on the Internet regulation in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia appears later in this dissertation.

We are aware of the fact that Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, and many other forms of social media were used during the political crises in the Muslim World as online platforms to share narratives of political uprising. By now thousands of videos related to the Arab Spring are available on YouTube. This dissertation, however, studied the most "spreadable" videos (Burgess 2010; Green and Jenkins 2011) of political protests that were uploaded to YouTube during the political crises in Pakistan (2007), Tunisia (2010/11), and Egypt (2011).

The term "spreadable media" refers to the most circulated and viewed videos on YouTube. Green and Jenkins (2011) introduced the term "spreadable media" as a substitute for "viral videos." According to them, the concept of "spreadable media" helps us understand "what happens when a large number of people make active decisions to pass along an image, song, or a bit of video that has taken their fancy to various friends, family members, or large social networks?" (p. 111). They add that because of the popularity of social media such as YouTube, audiences "play an active role in 'spreading' content: their choices, their investments, and their actions determine what gets valued" (p. 116).

For this study, I substituted the term "most spreadable" with "most viewed," which corresponds better to the objectives of this dissertation. The "most viewed" videos may have been produced and uploaded either by ordinary citizens including the protestors themselves or by traditional sources of media such as *Al-Jazeera, CNN,* and *Reuters*. It may be mentioned here that it is hard to find direct evidence whether social movements themselves were involved in uploading these videos of political protests. YouTube's inherent nature of maintaining anonymity of political actors might be one of the reasons in this regard. In other words, this project investigates the product itself, not the producers. The product is one of the

six dimensions of research advanced by Berkowitz (2011). The primary reason for using "most viewed" YouTube videos of political protests is that these videos have a stronger tendency to represent the population of protest-related videos available on this online platform. Also, YouTube provides opportunities for multi-level analysis, which will help contextualize when these videos were uploaded, how many viewers watched these videos and how many comments each video received. Furthermore, YouTube is an excellent archive of videos related to Pakistan and the Arab Spring, which can be accessed easily by using YouTube's search engine as well as other data collection software freely available such as the *ContextMiner*. In the Methods section of this dissertation, I will provide a detailed description of this software and why it was helpful in gathering the most relevant data on YouTube. This kind of multi-level research is not possible for Facebook and Twitter because of the private nature of these social media.

The omnipresent nature of protest videos on YouTube (Burgess 2010; Green and Jenkins 2011; Robinson 2011) and online debates in response to those videos provide additional data on the nature of online dialogue that encouraged civic engagement during and after the political crises of Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt respectively. Again, it is important to study how social media in developing countries such as Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt are becoming agents of change when conventional news sources fail to play their role in society because of strict governmental control. Different pressure groups such as extremist religious groups and other vested interests created hurdles against the smooth and free functioning news media in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia. These factors may also be contributing to the popularity of YouTube as an alternative to traditional media (Peer and Ksiazek 2011). For example, an increasing percentage of the public in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia have started

relying on the Internet for information about current events and to give feedback on critical issues (Freedom House 2010; Ghannam 2011; Mendel 2011).

Another important reason for choosing YouTube over the other forms of networked social media is the site's inherent ability to become an alternative to TV media because of its simultaneous audio-visual and textual capabilities. As discussed earlier, dictators in the three countries under investigation always kept television media under their direct control because of the importance and influence of this medium over the masses (Eko 2012). The ruling elite's control of broadcast media in the three countries under study left people with no choice, but to start looking for other independent sources such as *Al-Jazeera*, a Qatar-based satellite TV network, and Internet websites to get unbiased versions of news and information.

YouTube, however, bridged this gap not only for citizens to have an alternative to TV media, but also gave them an opportunity to become producers of their own narratives at the same time. It was not only protesters who benefitted from YouTube as an alternative to TV media during the political uprisings, but also traditional media organizations such as *Al-Jazeera* also followed YouTube to get updated information and protest-related videos shot on the streets of Tunisia and Egypt. Thus, analyzing YouTube's videos of political protests in the three countries will help create a better understanding of this site's role as an alternate option to television when traditional media outlets were shut down by the ruling elites.

Not only this, but the integrated and networked nature of YouTube also makes this site an important focus for social media's role in social movements. By integrated and networked, I mean YouTube's ability to be accessed, viewed, commented, and disseminated via Facebook and Twitter by simply having access to smartphones, computers, and the availability of an Internet connection. In other words, YouTube empowers viewers to not

only respond and engage in a political dialogue online, but also to engage equally in informational activism by disseminating the content online.

Since this study is about political protests in authoritarian regimes where speaking up against dictators and monarchs involves risk, anonymity becomes an important tool for online protesters so they can engage in a political dialogue without fearing for their lives (Rohlinger and Brown 2009). Bennett and Segerberg (2011) argue that the anonymity factor makes online activism more popular in authoritarian regimes than in open societies:

> It is easy to grasp why personalized networking is so appealing in authoritarian regimes such as Tunisia, or Egypt, where conventional political organization—particularly of the democratic reform variety—is often policed and punished. Joining online protest networks offers at least a measure of anonymity and safety in the numbers of people with mobile phones, access to Internet cafes, or friends with tech skills, often resulting in dense recombinant networks. (p. 41)

We have seen in the case of the political crises in the three countries under investigation, that the traditional media were blocked and citizens were being punished for expressing views against their oppressive regimes. For example, in Egypt bloggers were punished, beaten, and jailed for criticizing the military and the Mubarak regime (Mendel 2011; Stack and Bronner 2011). Similarly, Pakistan is ranked as the world's deadliest country for media professionals as several journalists were kidnapped, tortured, and killed for criticizing the country's intelligence agencies and military establishment (Ricchiardi 2012; CPJ 2013). In just three years (2010-2012), 24 journalists were killed in the line of duty (CPJ 2013). Just like Egypt and Pakistan, traditional media never enjoyed freedom in Tunisia. During the Jasmine Revolution, President Ben Ali banned *Al-Jazeera* and other independent news sources in the country so as to curb the political uprisings against his regime (Mir 2011).

In this situation, YouTube provided anonymity to online political activists in these three countries. To avoid the repercussions of speaking up, people created fake profiles and kept uploading videos of political protests during the political uprisings in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia. This factor of anonymity is difficult to achieve on Facebook and Twitter. Perhaps it is because of the unique abilities of this networking site (such as the opportunity to maintain anonymity and engage politically, simultaneously), closed societies like China, Saudi Arabia, Iran and others are also taking drastic measures to ban this networking site. An article regarding the government's ban on YouTube in Pakistan, published in The New Yorker, describes Web-censoring countries' frustration with YouTube this way:

> Google has diverse presences in other Web-censoring countries. In China and Iran, where censorship is the norm, YouTube is completely blocked, but in Saudi Arabia a state agency filters pornographic and other "immoral" sites. From 2007 to 2010, YouTube was repeatedly blocked in Turkey for posting videos that "insulted Turkishness" and the country's founder, Kemal Ataturk. Eventually, a company in Germany asserted a copyright to those videos and took them down, and YouTube was unbanned. Google blocked the trailer for "Innocence of Muslims" in Indonesia, India, Jordan, Malaysia, Russia, Singapore, and Turkey after the governments of those countries requested removal of the video from YouTube. So the censorship that the site has accommodated, in various ways and to various extents, does not pose a dilemma for YouTube, per se. But it leaves possible security issues for any in-country staff, along with potential legal liabilities. Google would need exemption from country-specific laws in the window of time that exists between a potentially offensive video being uploaded and it being removed or restricted on the site. But, as Google stated in its letter to the Lahore High Court, it hasn't been offered that protection in Pakistan. (The letter says that Google requires more than just an expression of goodwill from the Lahore High Court; it needs a "legislative change" in Pakistan that insures Intermediary Liability Protection for Web forums in general). (Sethi 2013, p. 3).

Finally, YouTube is available anywhere and everywhere across the globe, and carries messages beyond national boundaries. Even in Pakistan where YouTube is blocked since 2010, "people with downloaded V.P.N. software accessed YouTube from all over the

country" (Sethi 2013, p. 3). Furthermore, YouTube is an excellent source of archival information, which can be accessed for research-related purposes without special permissions or concerns about users' privacy.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study revolves around two basic assumptions: First, although everybody is talking about the "Arab Spring," the study shows that this political uprising is part of a bigger phenomenon, which is taking place in many Muslim-majority countries, not just in the Middle East. The phenomenon therefore should not be misrepresented by labeling it as something limited to the Arab countries. These political uprisings range from Pakistan's political crisis in 2007 to the ongoing civil wars in Azerbaijan, Syria, and Mali. Thus, the study discusses the political uprisings and social movements as something bigger than just the "Arab Spring." That is why analyzing and comparing YouTube videos of the 2011 political uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt with Pakistan's 2007 political crisis will better illuminate the role of YouTube as a "voice" in a bigger context.

Second, most scholarship on social movements treats communications as a peripheral reason for the formation and sustainability of social movements and revolutions (Olson 1965; Hirschman 1970; Skocpol 1979; Tilly 1990; Tarrow 1998). This dissertation, however, assumes that digital communication and information activism played a central, not a peripheral, role in the political activism and upheavals in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia. For this reason, the content of protest-related videos on YouTube will be treated as central while trying to explore and understand the nature of cultural and ideological themes deployed in the content of the most viewed videos.

Before providing a roadmap for this dissertation, it is important to mention here that this investigation is based solely on a study of the content of 60 "most viewed" protest-related YouTube videos of the uprisings in the three countries. It does not make any claims on the impact or effects of YouTube on the revolutions. In other words, this study looks at YouTube as a "voice," an alternative outlet to the government-controlled media in countries like Pakistan, Egypt and Tunisia. Also, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation whether social movements and social media led to the revolutions, because I studied the content of videos, not their impact. Thus, conclusions and the implications discussed in the later chapters of this study should be interpreted in the bigger context of digital communication and social media in general, and how these new avenues of communication can open more opportunities for research while seeking guidance from existing literature on media and social movements.

Roadmap of the Dissertation

The second chapter of this study discusses the overall context of the mass media in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt along with providing a thorough discussion on the Arabic TV network, *Al-Jazeera.* The chapter provides a detailed discussion on the 1) politico-cultural and legal situation of the media in Pakistan, followed by a similar discussion on Tunisia and Egypt. This discussion provides contextual information regarding why the mass media in these countries only served the interests of the ruling elite, and why the social media were welcomed as alternative media. The chapter then provides a comprehensive discussion of the emergence and popularity of *Al-Jazeera* in and beyond the Arab World and how it transformed the media situation in the Muslim World. The chapter then reviews the literature on the introduction of the Internet as a new avenue of communication in society. The last part

of the chapter summarizes the entire debate, and focuses on how this debate on different media approaches facilitates research on social media and political activism/protest politics in the three countries under study.

Providing a theoretical framework of the study, Chapter 3 discusses 1) what social movements and revolutions are, 2) the historical development of the concept of social movements and revolutions, 3) Hirschman (1970), Tarrow (1998), and Lohmann's (1994) perspectives on the ideological paradigms of social movements and revolutions, and 4) an explanation of the significance of digital communication in the creation and sustainability of social movements during the political uprisings in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. 5) The chapter ends with six research questions to be investigated for the study.

The next chapter, *Methodology*, provides a discussion on the descriptive visual content analysis and qualitative thematic analysis that were used as mixed-methods for this investigation (Creswell 2004). The chapter begins with a brief discussion of both descriptive visual content analysis and the qualitative content analysis. It then offers a detailed description of the data collection and analysis for this dissertation, including: the unit of analysis, population and sample selection, search terms used for data collection, the timeframe for each case study, the criteria for selection of videos, coders' training, inter-coder comparability and reliability, and coding guidelines.

Chapter 5 of this investigation discusses significant findings in the context of each of the research questions posed in this dissertation. The next chapter titled, *Discussion*, summarizes the significant findings of this dissertation. Implications of the findings and suggested directions for future research are presented. The limitations of this investigation are also discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2: POLITICO-CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter discusses the overall context of the mass media in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt along with providing a thorough discussion on the Arabic TV network, *Al-Jazeera*. The chapter will start by discussing the 1) politico-cultural and legal situations of the media in Pakistan, which will be followed by a discussion on Tunisia and Egypt. 2) A discussion on the politico-cultural and legal situation of media in the three countries will paint a picture of the political, social, and cultural context of the media in general and social media in particular in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia. How did the governments in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia react to the informational activism of citizens in the three countries? This discussion provides us contextual information regarding why the mass media in these countries only served the interests of the ruling elite, and why the social media were welcomed as alternative media in the three countries. 3) The chapter then provides a thorough discussion of the emergence and popularity of *Al-Jazeera* in and beyond the Arab World and how it transformed the media situation in the Muslim World. It also discusses *Al-Jazeera's* connection to networked social media during the political uprisings under investigation. 4) The chapter then reviews the literature on the introduction of the Internet as a new avenue of communication in society. The last part of this chapter uses case studies to illuminate the emergence and popularity of the Internet in non-Western societies including the Middle East. 5) The chapter summarizes the entire debate, and focuses on how this debate on different media approaches facilitates research on social media and political activism/protest politics in the three countries under study.

Politico-Cultural and Legal Situation of Pakistani Media

Pakistan, which means, "Land of the Pure," got its independence from British rule on August 14, 1947 (Rashid 2008; Lieven and ebrary Inc. 2011). "The Indus Valley civilization, one of the oldest in the world and dating back at least 5,000 years, spread over much of what is presently Pakistan" (CIA Factbook 2013). Located in the Indian sub-continent, the area has a long history of successive invasions "from the Persians, Greeks, Scythians, Arabs (who brought Islam), Afghans, and Turks" (CIA Factbook 2013) to the British.

The country, slightly less than twice the size of California, with a population of more than 180 million people, has a number of historical problems ranging from repeated military interventions, poor economic conditions, emergency crises, unfriendly relations with neighboring states, including India and Afghanistan, rising inflation, unemployment among educated youth, to the challenges of media freedom (Al-Mujahid 1982; Arif 2010; BBC News 2010; Lieven and ebrary Inc. 2011; CIA Factbook 2013). According to the World Bank statistics, more than 22% of the population of Pakistan is currently living below the poverty line. More than 96% of the country's population is Muslim (Sunni 90%, Shia 10%), while Christian and Hindus constitute 4% of the country's total population. The CIA's World Factbook summarizes Pakistan's challenges this way:

> Over the past few years, low growth and high inflation, led by a spurt in food prices, have increased the amount of poverty - the UN Human Development Report estimated poverty in 2011 at almost 50% of the population. Inflation has worsened the situation, climbing from 7.7% in 2007 to almost 12% for 2011, before declining to 10% in 2012. As a result of political and economic instability, the Pakistani rupee has depreciated more than 40% since 2007…Pakistan must address long standing issues related to government revenues and energy production in order to spur the amount of economic growth that will be necessary to employ its growing and rapidly urbanizing population, more than half of which is under 22. (CIA Factbook 2013)

Constitutional Framework of Free Speech in Pakistan

Prior to discussing the media situation in Pakistan, let's look at the *Constitution of Pakistan* and whether it provides any liberties for the freedom of speech and expression to the citizens of Pakistan. Article 19 and 19A of Pakistan's constitution guarantees the right to freedom of speech and expression and the right to freedom of press in the country (Naqvi 2013). According to Article 19 of the constitution:

- *Article 19*: Every citizen shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, and there shall be freedom of the press, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of the glory of Islam or the integrity, security or defense of Pakistan or any part thereof, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, commission of or incitement to an offence.
- *Article 19A*: Right to information− Every citizen shall have the right to have access to information in all matters of public importance subject to regulation and reasonable restrictions imposed by law (Constitution 2013).

It may be noted that the more than 130 page-long constitution of Pakistan is comprised of 280 articles in total that cover subjects ranging from religion to definition of the state to ensuring justice and equality to all the citizens of the country. Some of the articles such as the "Protection of Property Rights" (Article 24) and "Promotion of Social Justice and Eradication of Social Evils" (Article 37) take up most of the space in the constitution because they are described in detail. On the contrary, the articles related to the freedom of speech and expression carry very limited space in the constitution. Also, religion, particularly Islam, takes up most of the discussion in the constitution. For example, Article 2, and Article 31of the Constitution focus on Islam as the state religion, and the country's responsibility to promote an Islamic way of life. This focus on religion in Pakistan's Constitution leads us to

another important aspect of the controversial laws in the country that hinder free speech and freedom of expression.

Anti-blasphemy Laws in Pakistan

Among all countries with a Muslim majority, Pakistan is known for having the harshest anti-blasphemy laws (BBC News 2012; The Guardian 2013). According to the BBC, Pakistan inherited anti-blasphemy laws from its British rulers:

> The offences relating to religion were first codified by India's British rulers in 1860, and were expanded in 1927. Pakistan inherited these laws after the partition of India in 1947. Between 1980 and 1986, a number of clauses were added to the laws by the military government of General Zia-ul Haq. He wanted to "Islamicise" them and also legally to separate the Ahmadi community, declared non-Muslim in 1973, from the main body of Pakistan's overwhelmingly Muslim population. (BBC News 2012)

According to the Pakistan Penal Code (Article 295-B, Article 295-C, Article 298-A, Article 298-B, and Article 298-C), any blasphemous act—defiling of a copy of the Holy Quran, use of derogatory remarks in respect of the Holy Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him), use of derogatory remarks in respect of holy personages by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, or by any imputation—"shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine" (Pakistan Penal Code 2014).

It may be mentioned here that the Pakistani government had blocked YouTube accusing the site of containing blasphemous videos. Unlike Saudi Arabia and some other Muslim majority countries, YouTube services are not localized in Pakistan. The Pakistani government has started negotiating "with the administration of YouTube [Google] regarding a local version of the YouTube service similar to Saudi Arabia module" (The Express Tribune 2014).

This dissertation, however, argues that the Pakistani government used anti-blasphemy laws as a tool to block the ever-growing influence of YouTube as an alternate medium on the country's political stage. In other words, "[t]hough most such bans are currently for blasphemous and pornographic sites, they are increasingly used to remove content that contain criticism of the military, secessionist sentiments, and expressions of sexual freedoms" (Sethi 2013, p. 3). YouTube's role as an alternate medium was witnessed during the political crisis of 2007/08 when President Musharraf had blocked the transmission of the entire country's broadcast media (Muralidharan, Dixit et al. 2008; Arif 2011; Hashim 2012).

In order to explore the role of social media in Pakistan, it is imperative to discuss the politico-cultural context of the Pakistani media. The news media in Pakistan have a long history of resistance to the authoritarian rulers before and after the founding of the modern country. The resistant role of media in the region is much older than the birth of the country itself. In other words, the birth of the Pakistani press is "enmeshed in sub-continental journalism" (Al-Mujahid 1982, pp. 159-166), and that's why it is important to glance at the change to histroy of the Muslim press before the inception of Pakistan. Pakistani media scholars identified three principal strands of the press in colonial India—the Anglo-Indian press, the nationalist press, and the Muslim press (Ali and Gunaratne 2000). The emergence of the Muslim press in British India in 1836 was part of a long history of resistance against the British rule:

> The subcontinent's Muslim press, which marks the origin of the Pakistani press, emerged in 1836, with the publication of Maulvi Muhammed Baqar's *Urdu Akhbar.* It began as a literary paper in Delhi, but as relations between the local population and the British deteriorated, it became political and highly critical of British rule. (Ali and Gunaratne 2000, p. 157)

Soon after gaining independence from the British in 1947, Pakistan inherited a number of internal and external conflicts. A constitutional crisis, unequal distribution of resources among the four provinces, military interventions, and Indo-Pakistani tension over Kashmir (Paul 2005) paved the way for all the consecutive military and so-called democratic regimes in Pakistan to hamper the freedom of the press (Freedom House 2010).

In Pakistan, media freedom remains a dream, and almost every government (democratic or military) has tried to suppress the media by introducing new laws and regulations. According to a global survey of media independence, Pakistan is ranked 139th on the table of global press freedom rankings of 195 countries (Marchant 2008; Freedom House 2010; Ricchiardi 2012). It is not only the press freedom ranking that puts Pakistan at among one of the lowest in the list, also according to several reports by international media monitors, the country has been ranked as "the most dangerous place on earth" for journalists (Ricchiardi 2012). Military and religion remain the two sacred cows in Pakistan when it comes to the freedom of media. In Pakistan, "[m]edia workers have been kidnaped, tortured, and beaten to death for delving into the nation's potent military apparatus and spy agencies. Bodies have been found with throats slit and flesh punctured with electric drills by Islamic militants, political extremists, and gangsters who take umbrage at what they write" (Ricchiardi 2012, p. 4).

Up until 2001, state-run television (Pakistan Television Corporation) and Radio Pakistan were the only electronic media sources of news for Pakistani audiences (Khalid 2008). However, after the 9/11 attacks in the United States and the subsequent war on terror in the northern areas of Pakistan, the whole environment changed dramatically. The state-run media could no longer satisfy the increasing demands of national and international audiences,

who wanted to know more about the war on terror along the borders of Pakistan and in Afghanistan (Arif 2010). The "renaissance began in 2002 when then-President Pervez Musharraf freed up the broadcast laws and set in motion a media market boom that revolutionized how news was reported" (Ricchiardi 2012, p. 4). In order to facilitate and regulate the private electronic media and the Internet, President Musharraf established Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) (PEMRA 2010) through an ordinance on March 1, 2002. PEMRA was given complete authority over the operation of private media including online media. Taking advantage of the situation, local investors, particularly print media owners, started investing in the opening of private news channels and sophisticated websites (Freedom House 2010). Now there are approximately 90 private TV channels, including national and local ones (BBC News 2010; Ricchiardi 2012). Besides domestic television networks, 69 foreign satellite channels are now operational in Pakistan (CIA Factbook 2013). A majority of these channels focus on hard news coverage, particularly politics, terrorism and war-related news stories (Arif 2010). Along with providing news and entertainment, political discussion programs on private televisions are becoming popular among Pakistani audiences.

Cellphones are another significant growth in the country's communication system. According to the most recent data provided by CIA, the country's "mobile-cellular subscribership has skyrocketed, exceeding 110 million by the end of 2011, up from only about 300,000 in 2000: More than 90 percent of Pakistanis live within areas that have cell phone coverage and more than half of all Pakistanis have access to a cell phone" (CIA Factbook 2013). Also, "[t]he average Pakistani mobile phone subscriber sends 128 SMS

messages per month, compared to a global average of 105. That high number exists even though the country's illiteracy rate is 50 percent" (Ricchiardi 2012, p. 14).

In November 2007, when President Musharraf imposed a state of emergency in the country (Muralidharan, Dixit et al. 2008), the newly privatized electronic media became more critical of the military regime and demanded the restoration of the constitution and democracy in the country. Ricchiardi (2012) describes these circumstances this way:

> In March 2007 Musharraf fired Supreme Court Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, sparking the Lawyer's Movement and grassroots protests that brought tens of thousands into the streets to oppose his interference with the judiciary. TV's non-stop coverage, political commentary, and raucous call-in programs helped fuel public opinion, posing a public relations nightmare for the regime. (p. 8)

In order to control the content of private television channels, the government banned all the private news channels for more than a month around November 2007 (Freedom House 2010). Pakistani journalists were also threatened with arrests and punishment if they tried to cover any political protests against the government or the military establishment (Freedom House 2010). This ban on the traditional media in Pakistan left journalists and the audiences with no option but to rely on the Internet to meet their news and information needs and keep them updated about the ongoing political crisis in different parts of the country (Arif 2011). In order of usage, the most popular websites among Pakistanis are Google, Facebook, YouTube, Yahoo, Blogger.com, Wikipedia, and Twitter (Alexa.com 2013). It is pertinent to mention here that turning their attention to alternate media sources is not a new phenomenon for Pakistani audiences. Well before the introduction of social media in early 1990s, "the state-owned channel Pakistan Television (PTV) dominated the media scene [in the country].

Pakistanis turned to illegal satellite dishes and illegal channels to circumvent censorship and religious repression" (Ricchiardi 2012, p. 7).

In addition to the ban on the broadcast media, the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) was established on March 1, 2002, through an ordinance to facilitate and regulate the private electronic media. PEMRA was given complete authority over the operation of private media including online media. Currently, all the licensing related to FM radio, satellite television, cable TV, and teleport comes under PEMRA, which can cancel the license of these electronic media outlets at anytime (PEMRA 2010). For the past several years, PEMRA did not hesitate using its authority over the private media in Pakistan by using different tactics including canceling licenses, banning broadcasts or imposing monitory punishments whenever media tried exercise their freedom of expression.

It is pertinent to mention here that based on this definition of constitutional freedom of speech and expression that was discussed previously under constitutional freedoms of Pakistan, it is evident that PEMRA, established by a military dictator, violated the constitution by imposing bans on newly emerging Pakistani private TV channels. However, it is important to keep in mind that throughout his stay in power, President Musharraf had suspended the Constitution and so PEMRA's unconstitutional treatment could not be challenged in court because Pakistan was being governed under Martial law, not the constitution.

The Emergence of Social Media in Pakistan

Though the Internet only made its debut in 1995 in Pakistan, the country ranks 8th on the list of top 10 Internet-consumer countries in Asia (Internet World Stats 2013). YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and political blogs are gaining popularity, particularly among

Pakistani youth and the educated community. By June 2010, the number of Internet users reached 20 million in the country with an 11.5% penetration rate (Internet World Stats 2013). This penetration contrasts sharply with the enrollment rate for graduate studies in the same country, which is 6.4 % (Global Education Database 2009). It means the Internet adoption rate in Pakistan is almost double the size of the higher education rate. English language ability is the main reason for comparing Internet penetration with higher education in Pakistan. Since English is the dominant language on the Internet, the educated elite in Pakistan is benefiting the most from this communication tool. Unlike the rest of the population, this elite can communicate easily in the English language (Arif 2011).

Founded in February 2005, YouTube—*Broadcast Yourself* is one of the most popular social networking sites in Pakistan (YouTube 2010). In just five years, countless videos related to Pakistani politics, culture, music, have been uploaded either by individuals or institutions. The growing popularity of YouTube is posing new challenges to the government's control over the flow of information in the country. In May 2010, Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA) blocked access to YouTube, blaming it for disseminating sacrilegious content in the country (BBC 2010). PTA took this step a "day after a court order to block Facebook over 'Everybody Draw Mohammed Day,' an online competition that encouraged users to post images of Islam's Prophet" (Ricchiardi 2012, p. 14). The directive issued by the PTA on May 21, 2010 to ban YouTube in Pakistan reads:

> PTA has directed all concerned operators to shut down website www.youtube.com in view of growing sacrilegious contents on it. It may be mentioned that PTA after all possible avenues were used within its jurisdiction, including using regular channels available on the FACEBOOK and YOUTUBE to launch protest, to avoid appearances of derogatory material available on their websites - which increased in numbers as time passed by, that PTA decided to completely shut down these sites from being viewed within Pakistan. PTA has so far blocked more than 450 links on Internet

> containing derogatory material. It was not only in line with the Constitution of Pakistan, the wishes of the people of Pakistan but also an extension of the court orders passed by the honorable High Court of Pakistan and directions of the Government of Pakistan. PTA has already announced a phone number and a complaint number to receive complaints on the issue. The attitude of administrators at FACEBOOK and YOUTUBE was in contravention to the WSIS Resolutions and their own policies advertised on the web for general public. PTA would welcome the concerned authorities of FACEBOOK and YOUTUBE to contact the PTA for resolving the issue at the earliest, which ensures religious harmony and respect. (PTA.Gov 2010)

PTA's ban included Facebook, YouTube, Wikipedia, along with other websites and Blackberry mobile services. All of these websites and social media, except YouTube, were restored shortly after the ban. Since May 2010, YouTube remains banned in the country, and the government of the newly elected prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, does not seem to be interested in lifting this ban (Isaacson 2013). This shows an example of the growing frustration of the political elite over the popularity of social media in Pakistan.

Like YouTube, Facebook has developed into another popular social network all over the world. According to a recent report, Facebook has more than 500 million active users, of which 70% are outside of the United States (Facebook 2010). By the end of 2009, there were 1,094,400 active Facebook users in Pakistan (Internet World Stats 2013), and the number continues to rise rapidly. Because of social media's ability to keep the consumers' identities hidden (Rohlinger and Brown 2009), the government is finding it difficult to arrest and punish the violators of existing media laws in Pakistan. Nevertheless, the Pakistani government routinely bans Facebook and YouTube whenever controversial and blasphemous content like the Mohammed cartoons and the recent "Innocence of Muslims" videos are uploaded to these social media.

According to the data provided by *Opennet Initiative (ONI),* by 2009, Pakistan had an estimated 20.4 million Internet users, with an 11.3% penetration rate. Currently, approximately 130 Internet service providers (ISPs) are serving the ever-increasing demands of Internet:

> Some of the leading ISPs include Wateen, Paknet, Linkdotnet, Comsats, and Cybernet. In 2007, Wateen Telecom, a subsidiary of Warid Telecom, introduced Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access (WiMAX), a telecommunications technology that provides a third-generation (3G) wireless alternative to cable and DSL. Pakistan is the first country in the world to implement such technology, which is designed to provide high-performance, high-speed Internet access over a larger area than other wireless technologies that offer either greater coverage or greater bandwidth can provide. (OpenNetInitiative 2012)

On the one hand, Pakistan is regarded as among those few countries in the world that is grasping the latest high-end Internet technology with greater bandwidth. On the other hand, Pakistan continues to implement the most controversial laws regarding the use of online media by its citizens. To understand this oxymoronic phenomenon, let's take a quick look at the existing rules and regulations that control Internet traffic in Pakistan.

Laws that Regulate the Internet In Pakistan

Ironically, there is no specific legal framework to regulate Internet filtering in Pakistan. Four governmental institutions—including the Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA), the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), the Supreme Court of Pakistan, and the Ministry of Information Technology (MoIT)—are involved in regulating Internet filtering, which makes things even more complicated. This hierarchy of multiple institutions function this way:

> On September 2, 2006, the MoIT announced the creation of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Evaluation of Web sites (IMCEW), responsible for monitoring and blocking Web sites containing blasphemous, pornographic,

> or anti-state material. The IMCEW is administered by the secretary of the MoIT and is composed of representatives from the MoIT, the PTA, the Ministry of the Interior, the cabinet, and other security agencies. Directives to block content are typically handed by the government or the Supreme Court through the IMCEW to the MoIT and PTA, who then pass the orders to individual ISPs. However, because there is no specific legal framework, directives can be given directly to the PTA and ISPs to block material without going through the IMCEW. (OpenNetInitiative 2012)

To provide some examples of how Internet filtering continues to affect people's access to social media, the *ONI* in its recent report provided three examples when the Supreme Court (2006), the government (2008), and PTA (2010) censored YouTube, Wikipedia, and several other social media sites:

- In 2006, the Supreme Court issued a directive that ordered the PTA to block access to 12 Web sites that included 'blasphemous' cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammad [PBUH]. Among this banned content was a Web site that was hosted on a Blogspot domain. Rather than blocking the offending Blogspot Web site, the PTA blocked access to the entire domain for approximately two months. At the same time, the Supreme Court ordered police to register cases of publishing or posting of blasphemous images under article 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code, under which blasphemy or defamation of the Prophet Mohammad [PBUH] is punishable by death.

- In 2008, the government issued an order to ISPs to block a URL and three IP addresses associated with a YouTube video clip of Geert Wilders, the Dutch lawmaker, considered "blasphemous" by the Pakistani government. Because the PIE was unable to conduct a URL-specific block, it performed an IP-wide block, which had the unanticipated consequence of rendering the entire YouTube domain inaccessible to much of the world for approximately two hours.

- In May 2010, the PTA ordered ISPs to block Facebook, YouTube, and certain Flickr and Wikipedia pages when an Internet user created a Facebook page entitled 'Post Drawings of the Prophet Mohammad Day.' The ban was ordered as a result of the Islamic Lawyers Association's request for a court injunction to ban Facebook, while the other Web sites were later banned because of 'objectionable material.' The blanket Facebook ban was lifted after the page in question was removed; however, the government stated that it would continue to block other Web sites that contained 'blasphemous content.' In the following month, the government also ordered the PTA to monitor

> ‘offensive content’ on Amazon, Bing, Google, Hotmail, MSN, Yahoo, and YouTube. (OpenNetInitiative 2012)

Despite the recent political changes on Pakistan’s political landscape (transition of power from military to democratic government), there is no improvement in ensuring the freedom of media in the country. On the one hand, YouTube is still banned in the country. PTA and PEMRA continue to curb constitutional freedoms of mass media by using different tactics every day.

Politico-Cultural and Legal Situation of Egyptian Media

Egypt, a transcontinental Arab speaking country, has a population of 85 million people (Cook 2012; CIA Factbook 2013). Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Persian, Arabs, and British ruled Egypt, whose history dates back to 3200 B.C. (CIA Factbook 2013). The country gained its full freedom from the British-backed monarchy in 1952, although its freedom came with challenges of a poor economy, debt, a rapidly growing population, and limited resources (CIA Factbook 2013). According to the World Bank stats, more than 25% population of Egypt is currently living below the poverty line. In terms of ethnicity, nearly 100% of Egyptians are Muslim (CIA Factbook 2013).

Constitutional Framework of Free Speech in Egypt

In order to discuss the media situation in Egypt before and after the Arab Spring, let's revisit Egyptian Constitution of 1971. The Article 47 and Article 48 of the Egyptian Constitution of 1971 (amended) are about the freedom of expression and the freedom of media, respectively. According to the Article 47:

> Freedom of opinion is guaranteed. Every individual has the right to express his opinion and to disseminate it verbally, in writing, illustration or by other means within the limits of the law. Self-criticism and constructive criticism is a guarantee for the safety of the national structure. (Al-Jazeera Website 2012; State Information Service 2014)

The Article 48, on the other hand, provides extremely limited media freedom particularly during the times of emergency rule in the country. The Article states:

> Freedom of the press, printing, publication and mass media shall be guaranteed. Censorship on newspapers is forbidden. Warning, suspension or abolition of newspapers by administrative means are prohibited. However, in case of declared state of emergency or in time of war, limited censorship may be imposed on newspapers, publications and mass media in matters related to public safety or for purposes of national security in accordance with the law. (Al-Jazeera Website 2012; State Information Service 2014)

It may be mentioned here that after the Arab Spring, Egypt proposed a new constitution in 2012. The proposed constitution is still waiting for a referendum to be adopted by the state (Rizk 2014). This proposed constitution, if adopted, will provide a little more freedom to the media and freedom of opinion to its citizens. The 2012 proposed constitution has two articles (Article 48 & Article 49) on media freedom. These Articles state:

> **Article 48:** Freedom of the press, printing, publication and mass media shall be guaranteed. The media shall be free and independent to serve the community and to express the different trends in public opinion, and contribute to shaping and directing in accordance with the basic principles of the State and society, and to maintain rights, freedoms and public duties, respecting the sanctity of the private lives of citizens and the requirements of national security. The closure or confiscation of media outlets is prohibited except with a court order. Control over the media is prohibited, with the exception of specific censorship that may be imposed in times of war or public mobilization.
> **Article 49:** Freedom to publish and own newspapers of all kinds is a guaranteed subject of notification for every natural or juridical Egyptian person. The establishing of radio stations, television broadcasting and digital media is regulated by law. (Al-Jazeera Website 2012)

This brief overview of the existing and proposed constitution of Egypt, particularly the articles related to the media freedom in the country help us understand that Egypt still has a long way to go in order to achieve the goal of true media freedom. The following discussion on the media situation of Egypt will further elaborate on this point.

Since 1960 when President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the mass media, Egyptians have not had a private press. Despite the change of leadership in Egypt, there was no change in the media situation as "Nasser's successors, Anwar Sadat and Hosni Mubarak, both military officers, continued the direct government control of the mass media" (Eko 2012, p. 135). President Mubarak's 31 years of emergency rule introduced several controversial media laws, and most of these laws were intentionally kept vague in nature.

The Audiovisual Broadcast Law of 2008 is among one of several such examples where uncertainty was kept in the law to maintain control over journalists by keeping them in a vulnerable position (Egypt Broadcast Law 2008). There are no laws that guarantee an individual right to information or access to information in Egypt (Mendel 2011; Cook 2012; Eko 2012). According to a report published by the Committee to Protect Journalists, Egypt lands on the list of the 10 worst countries to be a blogger (CPJ 2013).

On the one hand, Mubarak's government opened up broadband Internet in Egypt for economic reasons. On the other hand, it was concerned with how Egyptians use the Internet. Before and during the Arab Spring uprisings, the government required national identification cards from those using Internet cafes so that no one could benefit from the anonymity factor of the digital media (Open Net Initiative 2009). In order to keep absolute control over the Internet, cellphones, and satellite media, the Mubarak regime made *Telecom Egypt* as a regulatory agency, which was granted "the exclusive right to establish, operate and exploit international transmission networks between Egypt and any other country through international gateways via submarine and terrestrial cables, microwave links and satellites for fixed services and provides Telephone, Fax, Telex, and Telegraph Services over such networks" (Eko 2012, p. 135). During the revolution when *Al-Jazeera* provided live coverage of Tahrir Square protests, the Mubarak government vandalized *Al-Jazeera* offices, canceled its license and arrested its journalists, and confiscated all the equipment.

The political uprisings of 2011 led media scholars to become more and more interested in the Egyptian media. Although plenty of information exists about the state of media freedom in Egypt, the report, "Political and Media Transition in Egypt" by Mendel (2011) covers almost every aspect of Egypt's traditional and online media including

controversial legislation that still exists despite the political change in the country. The following paragraphs introduce key findings of this report in order to better understand the media situation in Egypt and whether mass media played any role in the political activism of 2011.

According to the report that appeared six months into Egypt's revolution, Mendel (2011) maintains that during 31 years of emergency rule by the Mubarak regime they introduced controversial legislation to control journalists, which led to high levels of self-censorship and has become deeply rooted in the culture at many media outlets. The Egyptian Penal Code includes several provisions on defamation. These include Article 179, making it a crime to insult the president; Article 184, protecting the Majlis al-Shaab (People's Assembly), the army, the courts and other public authorities; and Article 186, protecting the judiciary (Mendel 2011). Furthermore, saying or publishing anything against the president, army, and ruling elite was considered a crime according to Egypt's media laws. Also, any defamation case was dealt with criminal defamation law rather than civil defamation law, which violates international information protection laws.

It is pertinent to mention here that under the Emergency Law, cases against the media could be pursued in military courts, a procedure that is highly problematic from the perspective of media freedom, as well as other basic due process human rights (Initiative 2009; CPJ 2013). Content restrictions, which include religion, hate speech, and racial comments, continue to remain a problem in today's Egypt. Furthermore, in his report, Mendel (2011) observed:

> Egyptian revolution has directly impacted Egyptian Radio & Television Union (ERTU)'s governance systems, most significantly with the removal (at least temporarily) of the Minister of Information. Following Mubarak's departure, the Chair of the ERTU Board of Trustees was replaced by Dr.

> Samy Sherif, formerly a media and communications professor. In early June, however, Dr. Sherif was replaced by Tarek El-Mahdy, a military general, and the organization has reportedly been put under the direction of a council appointed by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces. As a result, it appears that ERTU is presently largely under the control of the governing military authorities. (p. 9)

The report further adds that before the revolution, applications for newspaper licenses reportedly had to be approved by the security forces; shortly after the revolution, the interim government announced that this practice would be stopped. Currently, no laws restrict media ownership monopoly. Also in the post-revolution Egypt, there are no specific rules on concentration of media ownership or cross-ownership.

In order to control and regulate the Internet, the Mubarak regime introduced the Telecommunications Law (NTRL) in 2003. According to this law, the use of Skype is illegal in Egypt (Egypt Telecommunication Regulation Law 2003). "It also renders the operation of a local Wi-Fi operation illegal, although these are extremely common in homes and businesses in the country" (Mendel 2011). The National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (NTRA) was established under this law. According to the Article 13 of the law, the NTRA, which was financially an independent authority with a privately owned bank, was given powers including:

> Article 13: Setting up the rules and conditions for granting special licenses for the establishment of Telecommunication Networks Infrastructure without prejudice to the provisions of the laws governing construction, urban planning, environmental and local administration, as well as the licenses for the operation and management of such networks, and the licenses for providing Telecommunication Services. Also issuing such licenses and monitoring their execution in accordance with the provisions of this Law in a manner that guarantees the rights of the Users, especially their privacy rights in accordance with the Law, and without disturbing the National Security, the State top interests, urban planning and health and environmental standards that are specified by the relevant Ministries and Heads of concerned entities. (Egypt Telecommunication Regulation Law 2003, p. 9)

By 2009, the country had 20 million Internet users and 83 million Egyptians (out of 85 million in total) had mobile cellular/ telephone service available to them. According to data provided by Arab Media Outlook (2013), Egypt has 19 daily newspapers with a total circulation of 4 million. As for TV media, the total television penetration rate in the country is 93% (satellite TV penetration: 43%; cable TV penetration: 0.2%). The broadband penetration in the country is 7.4%, whereas mobile phones penetration is 72% (Arab Media Outlook 2013). However, the report adds, traditional media sources including broadcast media are mostly under state control with "2 national and 6 regional terrestrial networks as well as a few satellite channels." Similarly, state-run radio "operates about 70 stations belonging to 8 networks" (CIA Factbook 2013).

Nature of Pre-Revolutionary Regime

Recent studies on Egyptian's revolution agree on four major factors that have contributed to the political uprising of 2011 in the country. These factors include unemployment, rising food prices, emergency rule since 1981, and the lack of freedom of expression because of the state-controlled mass media (Initiative 2009; Ghannam 2011; Harb 2011; Mendel 2011; Cook 2012; Eko 2012; Lynch 2012; CIA Factbook 2013). This dissertation assumes that it was because of the state's absolute control on traditional media that the Internet, cellphones, text messages, blogs, and other forms of communications started to become more and more popular among Egyptians. This kept adding to the regime's frustration with digital media.

> Although Egypt's interior ministry maintains a department of 45 people to monitor Facebook, nearly 5 million Egyptians use the social networking site among 17 million people in the region, including journalists, political leaders, political opposition figures, human rights activists, social activists,

> entertainers, and royalty who are engaging online in Arabic, English, and French. (Ghannam 2011, p. 5)

In an effort to control new modes of communication such as mobile phones, Internet, and satellite channels, the Mubarak regime introduced Audio-Visual Media Bill in 2008, which required media professionals to "avoid damaging 'social peace,' 'national unity,' 'public order,' and 'public values" (Egypt Broadcast Law 2008; Stanford 2008). Furthermore, according to the bill:

> Violators of the rules face imprisonment, cancellation of broadcasting licenses, the confiscation of equipment, and fines. The bill will create a National Agency for Regulation of Audio and Visual Broadcast, which will comprise national security and military intelligence representatives, to enforce the implementation of the proposed rules. The bill coincided with an increase in government's closure of TV channels. (Initiative 2009)

In contrast to recent claims that Egyptian political activism started after the Tunisian revolution of 2010, a report by OpenNetInitiative (2009) provides evidence that online political activism was already happening in the country in 2007 when a majority of Egyptian youth started using cellphones, blogs, YouTube, and Facebook to express their unhappiness toward the Mubarak regime. For example, out of 17 million Facebook users in the Arab world, 5 million users are located in Egypt (Ghannam 2011). Similarly, as compared to the 34 percent offline news seekers in Egypt, the number of online newspaper readers is about 50 percent in the country, which continues to grow (Survey 2009).

It was because of the growing popularity and influence of online media that more than three years before the Egyptian revolution, a blogger, Abdel Kareem Nabil Suleiman Amer was "sentenced in February 2007 to four years in prison…and was charged with offending the state institutions, destabilizing public security, and inciting others to demonstrate and strike via the Internet" (Open Net Initiative 2009). Furthermore, on April 6,

2008 (long before the Arab Spring), a group of Egyptian activists "managed to recruit supporters using Facebook for a general strike…protesting against rising food prices and President Hosni Mubarak's government" (Open Net Initiative 2009). The report highlights that, since 2004, the Internet had started becoming more and more popular among Egyptians, adding:

> The number of blogs in Egypt has risen from just 40 in 2004 to an estimated 160,000 in July 2008…. More than three fourths of Egyptian bloggers write in Arabic only, 20 percent write in both Arabic and English, and nearly 10 percent write in English only. More than 30 percent of Arabic-language blogs are Egyptian. Most Egyptian bloggers are young men in their 20s, while just over one fourth are female. More than half of Egyptian bloggers are between the ages of 20 and 30. (Open Net Initiative 2009)

So far, the discussion on Pakistani and Egyptian media laws and telecommunication regulations show clear similarities between the two countries. Both of these countries keep national security, military institutions, religion, and heads of states as supreme and untouchable. Also, both countries established telecommunication regulatory authorities during dictatorial regimes, not by their parliaments or elected representatives. Let's look at the legal situation of media in Tunisia and see whether that country, much smaller in size as compared to Pakistan and Egypt, pursued similarly aggressive and controversial media laws both for traditional media and the Internet.

Politico-Cultural and Legal Situation of Tunisian Media

Tunisia, a country with a population of 10.4 million (98% Muslim) is seen and celebrated as the birthplace of the Arab Spring revolutions that has sparked political activism across the Muslim World since 2010 (Ghannam 2011; Harb 2011; Mir 2011; Lynch 2012; The World Bank 2013). Known for its liberal policies towards women in contrast to other Arab states, Tunisia gained its independence from France in 1956 (CIA Factbook 2013). Since its independence until December 2010, two dictators ruled the country and dominated the country's politics. Habib Bourguiba ruled for 31 years until he was overthrown by Zine el Abidine Ben Ali. Ben Ali ruled Tunisia for 24 years and dominated the country's politics up until the Jasmine Revolution of 2010. (BBC 2013; CIA Factbook 2013).

Located in Northern Africa, Tunisia borders the Mediterranean Sea, between Algeria and Libya. According to the CIA Factbook country profile, in terms of ethnic representation, 98% of Tunisians are Arab. The country's official language is Arabic, but French is another widely spoken and understood language in Tunisia. Unlike other North African and Arab countries, Tunisia has a high literacy rate and a strong middle class and Islamist groups or political Islam did not play a significant role in country's recent revolution for change (Mir 2011).

Despite Tunisia's success in bringing in foreign investment and developing a flourishing tourism industry, the country failed to transfer economic prosperity to educated but unemployed youth because of corruption and nepotism (Ghannam 2011). It is believed that Wikileaks revelations on Ben Ali's corruption played a huge role in fueling the revolution of 2010 because a majority of Tunisians were able to easily access the information regarding their ruling elites online (Mir 2011). It may be noted that the current

unemployment rate in the country is 18.8% and more than 3.5% of the population still lives under the poverty line (CIA Factbook 2013).

Constitutional Framework of Free Speech in Tunisia

The 1988 Constitution of Tunisia (amended) provides the country with "no freedom of information law and citizens have little access to the government's financial information" (Henry 2011). Only the Article 8 of the Constitution refers to terms such as freedom of opinion, expression and the press. However, Article 8 spends more time and space on discussing the roles and expectations of political parties in the country rather than providing a comprehensive definition to the terms related to individual and press freedom. According the Article 8:

> Freedom of opinion, expression, the press, publication, assembly and association are guaranteed and exercised according to the terms defined by the law. The right to organize in trade unions is guaranteed. Political parties contribute to supervising citizens, in order to organize their participation in political life, and they should be established on democratic foundations. Political parties must respect the sovereignty of the people, the values of the republic, human rights, and the principles pertaining to personal status. Political parties pledge to prohibit all forms of violence, fanaticism, racism and discrimination. No political party may take religion, language, race, sex or region as the foundation for its principles, objectives, activity or programs. It is prohibited for any party to be dependent upon foreign parties or interests. The law sets the rules governing the establishment and organization of parties. (The Constitution of Tunisia 1988)

After the Jasmine Revolution (the name given to the Tunisian revolution), the new government of Tunisia has proposed a new Constitution for the country. If adopted, the new Constitution (Article 19) will have better provisions for the freedom of the media and individual freedoms in the country (Freedom House 2012; Carlotta 2014).

In addition to the lack of Constitutional guarantees for free speech, Tunisia's penal and press codes "contain broadly-worded articles that provide prison terms of up to five years

and fines for various types of peaceful speech, notably speech deemed defamatory toward individuals but also toward state institutions and speech deemed liable to disturb the public order or harm Tunisia's image" (Human Rights Watch 2011, p. 4). Several international organizations working on human rights and media freedom are skeptical of the post-revolutionary government's level of sincerity to ensure media freedom in the country, particularly when Tunisian Press Code continues to harass citizens:

> Outdated press and penal codes continue to restrict expression in the media sector. For example, on March 28, 2012, Ghazi Mohamed Beji and Jaber Ben Abdallah Majri were sentenced to seven-year prison terms and heavy fines for "mocking Islam" on Facebook and other social media websites.[37] Alarmingly, the government has remained silent on violent encounters between Salafists and the police, as well as Salafist attacks on secular activists and academics. (Freedom House 2012)

In the light of this discussion on Tunisian Constitutional provisions to media freedom and the functioning of Tunisian press and penal codes, we can now have an in-depth look at the media situation in Tunisia.

According to data provided by Arab Media Outlook (2013), Tunisia has 10 daily newspapers with a total daily circulation of 399,000. As for the electronic media, the total television penetration rate in the country is 92.5%, and it all comes from satellite. The broadband penetration in the country is 24%, which is much higher than Egypt's broadband penetration rate, which is only 7.4%. More than 18% of the Tunisian population has a Facebook account besides having easy access to smart phones and computers (Mir 2011). Also the mobile phone penetration rate for Tunisia is 87%, higher than Egypt's 72% (Arab Knowledge Report 2009; Arab Media Outlook 2013). Despite the fact that Tunisia dominates in cellphone and Internet penetration rates among Arab states, the country's mass media were predominantly controlled by the Ben Ali regime:

> Broadcast media is mainly government-controlled; the state-run Tunisian Radio and Television Establishment (ERTT) operates 2 national TV networks, several national radio networks, and a number of regional radio stations; 1 TV and 3 radio stations are privately owned and report domestic news stories directly from the official Tunisian News Agency; the state retains control of broadcast facilities and transmitters through L'Office National de la Télédiffusion; Tunisians also have access to Egyptian, pan-Arab, and European satellite TV channels. (CIA Factbook 2013)

Furthermore, in order to instrumentalize the telecommunication infrastructure in the country the Ben Ali regime established the Tunisian Internet Agency (ATI) in March 1996 (Eko 2012; Tunisian Internet Agency 2014). The ATI, which is the principal Internet Service Provider (ISP) in Tunisia, functions under the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies, and has an absolute monopoly over the functioning of the Internet (Eko 2012).

Since the Tunisian government was the sole Internet Service Provider (ISP) in the country, it banned a number of sites including "some free electronic mail services like Hotmail as well as human rights organizations like Amnesty International, the Committee to Protect Journalists, the International Human Rights Federation, and Reporters Without Borders" (Eko 2012, p. 134) even before the Tunisian revolution.

Since the entire Tunisian media were connected to the regime of Ben Ali, Tunisians did not trust their country's media, and international sources of information such as *France 24* and *Al Jazeera* carried far more weight in the forming of public opinion than local news sources (Mir 2011). The country banned *Al-Jazeera* several times before and during the revolution. In 2009, when the Arab TV network decided to host opposition leaders during Tunisian presidential elections, Tunisia suspended its diplomatic relations with Qatar as a mark of protest. During the Arab Spring revolution, the Ben Ali government canceled *Al-Jazeera's* license and arrested its staff.

Let's revisit the incident of the Tunisian burning man that is believed to be the spark of Jasmine Revolution, which triggered political unrests in different parts of the Muslim World. Since age 10, Bouazizi was the sole bread earner for his family, selling fruits and vegetables on his wooden cart in the local market of Sidi Bouzid (Ryan 2011). Because of his poor economic conditions, he did not graduate from high school, but made sure that his five younger siblings had a chance continue their education (DeSoto 2011). The circumstances that led to Bouazizi's self-immolation have a history of abuse, harassment, heavy monitory fines, and humiliation by the local authorities. In one of its investigative reports on Bouazizi, *Al-Jazeera* describes the circumstances this way:

> Six months before his [Bouazizi's] attempted suicide, police sent a fine for 400 dinars ($280) to his house – the equivalent of two months of earnings. The harassment finally became too much for the young man on December 17. That morning, it became physical. A policewoman confronted him on the way to market. She returned to take his scales from him, but Bouazizi refused to hand them over. They swore at each other, the policewoman slapped him and, with the help of her colleagues, forced him to the ground. The officers took away his produce and his scale. Publically humiliated, Bouazizi tried to seek recourse. He went to the local municipality building and demanded to a meeting with an official. He was told it would not be possible and that the official was in a meeting. (Ryan 2011, p. 1)

Disappointment, helplessness and humiliation led Bouazizi to take extreme step: On December 17, 2010 Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire in Sidi Bouzid in protest against poor economic conditions and police brutality (Tunisiaweekly 2013), and died of his burns on January 04, 2011(DeSoto 2011). It took President Ben Ali two weeks to visit the hospital where Bouazizi was admitted (Ryan 2011).

Bouazizi's protest suicide got national and global attention when someone posted the cellphone-recorded video of the "Tunisian burning man" on Facebook. The Arabic channel, *Al-Jazeera*, "picked up Ali Bouazizi's footage from the man's Facebook page, and

transmitted it to its transnational Arabic satellite audience that same evening" (Eko 2012, p. 130).

Even though the majority of Tunisians were already online before the Jasmine revolution, Tunisia witnessed real online activism when President Ben Ali tried to suppress protesters by shutting down the entire country's mass media outlets. "In the face of the national media blackout, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media became virtual bulletin boards where videos of governmental violence were posted, shared and discussed" (Eko 2012, p. 130). Thus, the emergence of the Internet took away the ruling elite's exclusive control over information. Now citizens had an alternate platform to express their opinions and unhappiness toward the regime via online activism.

In post-revolution Tunisia, even though the Ministry of Information that used to control media has been abolished, controversial media laws such as the Press Code and the Penal Code continue to exist (Mir 2011). Similarly, *Agence Tunisienne d'Internet* (ATI) (Tunisian Internet Agency) established during Ben Ali's regime in 1996, continues to monopolize and control Internet traffic in the country even after the revolution.

AL-Jazeera: A Channel of Revolutions

The Qatar-based television network, *Al-Jazeera* emerged as the most credible non-western media source in November 1996 (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003; Lynch 2006; Pintak 2006; Hafez 2008; El-Nawawy and Khamis 2009). With more than 65 bureaus across the globe, "*Al-Jazeera* Network has more than 3,000 staff members across the world, including more than 400 journalists from more than 60 countries" (Al-Jazeera 2013). According to the organization's website, the *Al-Jazeera* network consists of: 1) *Al-Jazeera Satellite channel* (Arabic) 2) *Al-Jazeera English*, 3) *Al-Jazeera Documentary*, 4) *Al-Jazeera*

Sport, 5) *Al-Jazeera Mubasher* (Live), 6) *Al-Jazeera Media Training and Development Centre*, 7) *Al Jazeera Centre for Studies*, 8) *Al-Jazeera Mobile*, 9) *Al-Jazeera.net* (the Arabic website), and 10) *Al-Jazeera English Online*, the English website (Al-Jazeera 2012; Al-Jazeera 2013).

Based on the data provided by the *Al-Jazeera* website, the TV network's English channel is broadcasting to more than 220 million households in more than 100 countries (Al-Jazeera 2013). Not only this, *Al-Jazeera* continues to maintain its strong presence of the social media as the TV network is the most watched "news channel on YouTube, receiving 2.5 million views per month. Launched on April 16, 2007, the *Al-Jazeera English* YouTube site has more than 25,000 videos currently live on the English channel" (Al-Jazeera 2013).

Al-Jazeera and Pakistan

Even though *Al-Jazeera* provided a comprehensive coverage of the political crisis of 2007 in Pakistan, academic archives provide little to no discussion on the role of *Al-Jazeera* TV network in Pakistan's context. There could be multiple factors for missing the debate on *Al-Jazeera*'s role in Pakistan: 1) Most of the scholarship on the Muslim World intentionally or unintentionally interprets the Middle East as the Muslim World, and discuss the Arab media landscape as Muslim media landscape. In fact, Muslim majority countries (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Indonesia) are located outside the Middle East. 2) Since *Al-Jazeera* originates from Qatar, located in the Arabian Peninsula, many Western media scholars associate the TV network as representing the Arab World. In fact the network TV channel has 65 bureaus around the globe, and broadcasts to more than 220 million households in more than 100 countries (Al-Jazeera 2013). 3) *Al-Jazeera* was launched in Arabic and then during the later years, it started its services in other languages including English, it is

generally believed that the TV network has its outreach only in Arabic speaking countries. Unlike the Middle East, Pakistan's national language is Urdu, which may be another reason that the existing scholarship on *Al-Jazeera*'s presence in the Muslim World does not even recognize the TV network's role in Pakistan, particularly during the political uprisings of 2007 when thousands of protesters came out on streets against military dictator, General Musharraf, and demanded the regime change. *Al-Jazeera* was already present in Pakistan (since 2001 when the US decided to go to war in Afghanistan), and had established its bureaus in all the major cities of Pakistan including the federal capital, Islamabad (Personal observation). When the President Musharraf had banned all the privately owned national TV networks, *Al-Jazeera* was still covering the political protests and airing them to the rest of the world.

Al-Jazeera and the Middle East

Most of the literature on the political uprisings of Tunisia and Egypt celebrate the role of this pan-Arabic TV network as an activist before and during the Arab Spring revolution (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003; Lynch 2006; Pintak 2006; Ghannam 2011; Harb 2011; Eko 2012). Thus, most of the literature reviewed in this section will be Arab-culture specific. However, this dissertation argues that the *Al-Jazeera* factor was not specific to the Arab region, rather it should be seen in the context of Muslim World. This dissertation will address this issue in detail in the discussion section. Also, since the existing scholarship used the term "Arab World" to discuss the role of *Al-Jazeera*, the study will use the same terminology in this section. However, it is important to clarify here that I disagree with this term "Arab World" because, as stated earlier, *Al-Jazeera's* role was even more prominent and

controversial during the war on terror in Afghanistan and Pakistan than in the cases of Egyptian and Tunisian political crises.

The study argues that *Al-Jazeera* actively used social media including YouTube to cover, disseminate and promote narratives of political uprising in the Muslim World. Because of the iconic importance of *Al-Jazeera*, we need to review the literature on this TV network. During the data collection for this study, it was observed that many of the Arab Spring related videos on YouTube were uploaded by *Al-Jazeera*. Thus, having a thorough discussion on this Arab media giant will help us better understand, contextualize and explain the role of media and communications in the political uprisings of the three countries under investigation. Therefore, a discussion on the emergence and popularity of the Qatar-based TV network will help answer whether any connection exists between social media and *Al-Jazeera* during the recent political uprisings.

In order to discuss *Al-Jazeera*, let's revisit Marshall McLuhan's claim, "The medium is the message" (McLuhan and Fiore 1967). Although he made this claim in the 1960s when we did not have satellite TVs and digital media, the claim started making more sense to media and communication scholars in this information age. Through his claim, Marshall McLuhan emphasizes that the medium itself, not the message, should be the focus of a study to understand change in a society. People tend to go for obvious (news) and ignore the structural realities (medium) that bring change in the society. Thus the claim, "The medium is the message," refers to the understanding of change in audience attitudes that results from the introduction of new medium.

Looking at the literature and particularly news coverage of recent political uprisings in the Muslim World, it is clear that a majority of claims and studies have focused on the

obvious (Arab Spring) and ignored how and why the Arab Spring took place. Thus an understanding of the medium, which is *Al-Jazeera* and the Internet in this case, will be helpful in finding out the root causes and ground realities that might have contributed to the social movements and revolutions across the Muslim World. This discussion will help us contextualize the overall media landscape in the Muslim World, and why social media were welcomed so quickly in most of these government-controlled countries.

To an average viewer, *Al-Jazeera* is just a satellite TV network based in Doha, Qatar. However, if we look at the history and context of this Arab-based satellite TV network, we realize that it is more than that: to some, *Al-Jazeera* is a phenomenon, to others it is a channel of revolutions; where *Al-Jazeera* is celebrated as an independent Arabic lens to view the world, it is seen as a "mouthpiece" of Al-Qaeda (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003; Lynch 2006; Pintak 2006). Launched in November 1996, with the collapse of *BBC* Arabic TV, *Al-Jazeera* continues to dominate the Arab and Muslim media landscape even today. The *BBC's* Arab channel collapsed when its major funder, Saudi Arabia backed off because of the channel's decision to air a controversial documentary on Sharia law (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003). The Amir of Qatar, Al-Thani, hired the entire BBC Arabic staff and pledged the first five years of financial support to *Al-Jazeera* to help survive (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003; Miles 2005). The channel, which was originally established as Arabic news and current affairs TV, has multiple operations in several languages including English. *Al-Jazeera* launched its free Arabic website in 2001 followed by *Al-Jazeera Mubasher* in 2005, and *Al-Jazeera Global English Services* in 2006. *Al-Jazeera Mubasher* is known for its unedited political programs and opinions. It may be noted that the TV network launched a

special *Al-Jazeera Mubasher* website exclusively for Egypt during the 2011 Arab Spring revolution (Al-Jazeera 2012).

Al-Jazeera as Politico-Cultural Catalyst

Al-Jazeera is known as a platform for change, channel of revolutions, a counter-hegemonic channel and the medium that changed the Muslim World's private sphere into a public sphere (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003; Lynch 2006; Pintak 2006; Harb 2011; Lynch 2012). In their landmark study on *Al-Jazeera*, El-Nawawy & Iskandar (2003) looked at multiple sides of *Al-Jazeera's* contributions to the Arab society. The authors claim that the most important politico-cultural change in the Arab region was because of *Al-Jazeera's* ability to break the spell of the private Arab sphere, which then provided a level-playing field for networked social media (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003; Hafez 2008; Ghannam 2011; Eko 2012).

For centuries, citizens in the Muslim World had been oppressed by their authoritarian regimes, they did not enjoy individual or media freedom, they had no right to express their political opinions and take part in the political process (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003; El-Nawawy and Khamis 2009). The only place that citizens in a majority of Muslim countries could express their opinions was in the private sphere. In other words, citizens in authoritarian regimes in the Muslim World engaged in political discussions in their private rooms and parlors with their friends (Wheeler 2006), and this private sphere ensured their anonymity and safety as long as it did not become public.

However, the launch of *Al-Jazeera* broke this spell by providing people a platform for expressing and shaping their opinions and taking part in the political discussions. Now the citizens, in these oppressed countries, had their own TV channel in the Arabic language that

allowed them to listen and speak on matters of important political issues of everyday lives (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003). Pintak (2006) describes such a change in the Arab culture as a "political and psychological watershed." After the launch and popularity of *Al-Jazeera*, now it is common for Arab citizens to say, "I am going out for a cup of coffee and Al-Jazeera" (Pintak 2006, p. 156).

Unification of Arab Citizens

According to media scholars, another big contribution of this satellite TV network is that it unified the Arab audience worldwide. Using the example of Canadian immigrant Helal family in their book, El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2003) make the case that regardless of their physical location, Arab citizens now feel united by watching *Al-Jazeera*. For this reason the channel is successful in creating public opinion in the Arab world. Arab immigrants in the US and Canada who used to rely on Western news sources such as *CNN* have now shifted to *Al-Jazeera* because of its coverage of controversial issues such as the Palestinian conflict, which was largely missing or underreported on Western news outlets.

Controversial News from the Arab Regions

Another important change in the Arab culture was *Al-Jazeera*'s decision to cover controversial issues in the Muslim World. For centuries, the Muslim World in general and the Arab World in particular, was known by its triangle of taboos: religion, sex and politics (Hafez 2008). Mass media outlets in the Muslim World were not allowed to discuss these three issues. However, *Al-Jazeera* challenged and changed this practice, which appalled not only the rulers, but also audience members themselves who were not prepared to listen to and watch controversial news and programs on their indigenous news media. This also came as a surprise to the West as *Al-Jazeera* broke the one-way flow of communication by providing

the Arab perspective on controversial news stories. The satellite channel provided coverage on controversial issues such as AIDS, the demolition of statutes of Buddha in Afghanistan, military regimes and their negative affects on society, and why Arabs are treated as a joke in the Western world—all examples of controversial content discussed on the famous *Al-Jazeera* program "The Opposite Direction" by Ahmad Mansour (Lynch 2006).

Al-Jazeera and the "Other" Opinion

This section deals with the Arab audience's ability and patience to listen to controversial points of views. Keeping in view *Al-Jazeera*'s motto "The Opinion and the Other Opinion," scholars including El-Nawawy & Iskandar (2003), March Lynch (2007), Harb Zahra (2011), and Pintak (2005) looked at how *Al-Jazeera* prepared the Arab audience to have the patience to listen to other opinions that do not conform to their ideologies. One of *Al-Jazeera's* talk shows "The Opposite Direction" by Mansour can be seen as an example in this regard. As El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2003) describe in their book, Mansour invited not only Palestinian leaders to discuss the Palestine-Israel conflict, but he also invited Israeli leadership, which generated lot of anger and frustration among the Arab audiences as well as Arab leadership. In other words, Arab media scholars claim that *Al-Jazeera* prepared the stage for revolution and change in the Arab world by preparing the audience to have the ability to not only express their opinions, but to have patience to listen to and respect other opinions.

Al-Jazeera, a "Counter-hegemonic" Channel

According to Harb (2011), *Al-Jazeera*'s ability to criticize and challenge oppressive regimes and leadership in the Muslim World makes the satellite network a counter-hegemonic channel. Throughout the history of the Arab World, mass media has either been

under direct control of these regimes or was in service of the leadership. This was for the very first time that an independent channel started airing programs in their indigenous language (Arabic) that openly criticize these oppressive regimes and foster public opinion against oppression.

Another scholar, Lynch (2006), observed that *Al-Jazeera*'s independence from Saudi Arabia and its decision to report on politics and controversial issues created an entirely new and radical Arab media environment that will continue to redefine and reshape the Arab media landscape. *Al-Jazeera*'s decision to challenge and criticize the Arab leaders, however, came with many challenges that the TV network had to face.

In summary, a majority of Arab media scholars believe that the channel not only created ripples in the status quo in the Muslim World, but also changed the Arab media landscape forever. It was because of the Qatar-based satellite channel that Saudi Arabia had to launch *Al-Arabia TV* as a direct response to *Al-Jazeera* (Harb 2011). *Al-Arabia* and *Al-Jazeera* are directly engaged in a competition not only for news, but to protect and promote their respective countries' ideologies (Harb 2011). This sense of competition in the context of Arab media is something extraordinary. No one could have imagined that the Arab World will have its own independent media and the society will be redefined and reshaped because of the competing media landscape.

Thus, another major achievement of *Al-Jazeera* is that it radically changed the Arab media environment (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003; Miles 2005). Other Arab countries could not remain indifferent in the presence of *Al-Jazeera*'s aggressive programs. In order to respond to *Al-Jazeera*'s popularity because of its aggressive programs, other Muslim countries including Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE started investing more in mass media

and opened up new satellite channels, which has generated a new era of competition and difference of opinions (Miles 2005). In summary, according to Arabic media scholars, what used to be the "news" and "journalism" in the Middle East is no more because of the *Al-Jazeera* factor. Also, the balance of political and communication power in the Middle East is not the same anymore. Now the "voice" monopoly (Lynch 2006) has been challenged and changed. Besides Qatar, media privatization is being witnessed in Pakistan, Egypt and the UAE, which is a step forward in breaking the private sphere and the creation of a Muslim public sphere in the Middle East and beyond.

Arab Governments and the Arab League

As stated earlier, *Al-Jazeera*'s decision to challenge and criticize Arab governments was not without a price. The channel's aggressive programming and open criticism of the Arab World's leadership infuriated the political elites, especially Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt and Tunisia. Saudi Arabia, which plays a leading role in the oil producing Gulf region—Gulf States include: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, UAE, and Bahrain—has forced member countries (Gulf states) not to give advertising to *Al-Jazeera*. Thus, despite having more than 35 million viewers, *Al-Jazeera* is dependent on funding from Qatar (Miles 2005; Lynch 2006; Harb 2011). The Arabic TV network could not grow revenues from advertising, but it did not change its commitment to challenge the voice monopoly and criticize Arab leadership (El-Nawawy and Iskandar 2003).

Apart from depriving the Qatar-based TV network from advertising revenue, Arab governments and particularly the Arab League used another tactic to contain *Al-Jazeera* by introducing the Arab Satellite Broadcasting Charter in 2008. In response to *Al-Jazeera's* critical programing and open criticism of their policies, information ministers from countries

included in the Arab League got together in Egypt in 2008 and proposed "Principles for regulating broadcasting satellite transmission in the Arab World." All the Arab League countries, except Qatar, signed the Arab Satellite Broadcasting Charter (Arab Satellite Broadcasting Charter 2008).

According to this charter, all satellite TV channels in the Arab World are bound to abide by an "Arab Media Code of Ethics." No channel can air any program or content that defames Arab leadership and/or religious symbols. The charter also bans any kind of content that has a tendency to jeopardize the national peace and solidarity of Arab nations. It pledges to maintain and protect the Arab culture in this globalized world, and encourages fair competition among satellite channels that promote understanding between different cultures.

If we look at the charter carefully, it clearly shows the frustration and fear of Arab governments because of *Al-Jazeera*. This charter can be seen as another attempt by the oppressive regimes to maintain their voice monopoly and hegemony over the mass media and individuals' freedom of expression. Qatar, for which *Al-Jazeera* is the biggest export after oil, understood the potential threat to *Al-Jazeera's* media freedom and thus decided not to sign the charter. This factor of not being signatory of the charter makes *Al-Jazeera* an independent and free satellite TV network that continues to challenge and criticize the status quo and power monopoly in the Arab World (Lynch 2008).

Despite their frustration and fear, Arab governments have to deal with *Al-Jazeera*. For example, in 1999, Kuwait banned *Al-Jazeera* and asked its staff to leave the country (El-Nawawy and Iskander 2002). Similarly, in 2009, two years before the revolution, Tunisia cancelled *Al-Jazeera's* license when the channel hosted opposition party leaders during the Tunisian presidential elections. Despite the repeated bans, Arab governments including

Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Bahrain, and Egypt had to reissue licenses to *Al-Jazeera* because of the fact that people of these countries love to watch *Al-Jazeera*.

The "Arab Street"

It is important to look at how the average Arab citizen reacted to *Al-Jazeera's* relatively independent approach toward social and political issues in the Muslim World. Reviewing the literature, it becomes clear that Arab governments and their citizens had opposite reactions to *Al-Jazeera*. While *Al-Jazeera* was challenged by Arab governments, the people of the Arab World welcomed *Al-Jazeera*, which for them is connected to their sense of identity (El-Nawawy and Iskander 2002).

In the Middle East, people have a history of trusting foreign and Western news channels instead of their own mass media. The reason for this distrust of their own media is the fact that the mass media in the Arab World are not free and serve as the propaganda machine of the state. For example, in Tunisia almost all the mass media belonged to former President Zain-el-Abidine Ben Ali and so people in Tunisia trusted *Al-Jazeera* and *France 24* more to shape their public opinions on certain issues (Mir 2011). As we discussed earlier, *Al-Jazeera* united the Arab citizens across the world, and this factor of unification is based on the element of "trust" that people in the Middle East value the most (Fandy 1999; Wheeler 2006). In other words, the "Arab street" trusts *Al-Jazeera* and its programs. They understand that it is an independent channel, which has the audacity to challenge regimes in the Arab World.

Furthermore, as El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2003) put it, *Al-Jazeera* "contextualized the objectivity" in the Arab perspective. This refers to the interpretation of objective facts and figures of news in the Arab perspective. For example, when *Al-Jazeera* covers the

Palestinian conflict, it uses the word "martyr" for Palestinians who die during the conflict, whereas, CNN does not use such words while reporting the conflict. Thus this element of contextualizing objectivity in the Arab perspective provides an opportunity to the Arab audience to connect themselves with *Al-Jazeera*. Pintak (2006) termed *Al-Jazeera* as the Arab people's own independent lens to view the world. It is because of the element of trust that *Al-Jazeera* is known as the most influential TV network in shaping and creating public opinion in the Arab World. And perhaps this is the reason that Arab regimes are frustrated and afraid of *Al-Jazeera's* extraordinary power and popularity across the Muslim World.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Overview

In the 21st century, the Internet continues to redefine, challenge and change the overall scope of human communication, and social media is becoming an integral part of political communication (Edgerly, Vraga et al. 2013). This study analyzes the use of YouTube videos involving political protests by social movements in Pakistan, Egypt and Tunisia. The study compares Pakistan's political crisis of 2007 with the political uprisings in Tunisia, and Egypt. These latter uprisings are part of what is commonly known as the Arab Spring of 2011. By situating the North African uprisings in the broader concept of the Muslim World, this dissertation explores how online political activism is related to the broader concept of social movements (Dewey 1954; Skocpol 1979; Habermas 1989; Tilly 1992; Ghannam 2011; Harb 2011).

To begin with, this chapter will discuss 1) what social movements and revolutions are, 2) the historical development of the concept of social movements and revolutions, 3) Hirschman (1970), Tarrow (1998), and Lohmann's (1994) perspectives on the ideological paradigms of social movements and revolutions, and 4) an explanation of the significance of "digital communication" in the creation and sustainability of social movements during the political uprisings in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia.

What are Social Movements?

Introduced by German scholar Lorenz Von Stein in 1848, the term "social movements," refers to "group actions" in which individuals or organizations join a collective action to achieve a common goal (Stein 1848; Olson 1965; Hirschman 1970; Skocpol 1979; Jenkins 1983; Tilly 1992; Tarrow 1998). Social movements can be peaceful (Gandhi's non-violent movement for Indian independence during 1940's, American Civil Rights movement), violent (terrorist organizations, the Taliban's movement in Afghanistan and Pakistan), organized (gay rights movements, feminist movement), or unorganized (the Arab Spring uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Morocco, etc.).

Most of the literature on group actions treats social movements as an umbrella term (Huntington 1965; Dahl 1971; Ross 2001; Tarrow 2012), and so it is hard to provide a single agreed-upon definition of social movements. Thus, this study will spot light some of the key historical developments in the study of the paradigm of social movements and revolutions, before discussing the role of communications in protest politics. A majority of scholarship during the 1960s and 70s was concerned with how and why individuals participated in social movements (Jenkins 1983). The resource mobilization approach to group actions and social movements provides an explanation of the rational action of individuals in a collective action (Olson 1965; Hirschman 1970; Jenkins 1983). Put this way, historically the scholarship on group actions and social movements oscillates between traditional and rational views of collective behavior and group actions. According to the traditional view, group actions and social movements are deviant, irrational, random occurrences of individuals based on their emotional reaction to circumstances out of their control (Blumer 1939; Tilly and Tilly 1981; Shibutani 1988; Ostrom 1998; Imig and Tarrow 2001; Boudreau and Meyer 2009). The

rational view, on the other hand, treats individuals as rational actors who strategically analyze the cost and benefits to joining a group action (Olson 1965; Kousis and Tilly 2005; Kolb 2007; Tilly and Wood 2012).

Olson (1965) argues that rationality, self interest and the size of a group determine participation and collective action in groups. His argument challenges the traditionalists' view of participation and collective action that suggests a common interest is sufficient for people to take a group action. Olson (1965) adds that traditionalists do not entertain the economic logic of self-interest and rationality in their model. The most important factor for the traditionalists is "common interest" among individuals that forces them to organize and participate in a group action without evaluating the cost/benefit associated with a particular group action. Rationalist scholars in the comparative literature, however, argue that individuals participate and pursue their collective interests only when they find it cost effective and rational to do so (Olson 1965; Olson 1965; Verba, Normal et al. 1978).

In his work *Exit, Voice and, Loyalty,* Hirschman (1970) applies similar economic logic to political participation and collective action. Hirschman argues that the choice to leave or protest against the problems of an institution depends largely on the level of freedom and choice. According to the author, there are two possible responses to the decline of organizations, firms or states: exit, which means to leave the organization, and voice, which means to resist and protest to reverse the decline.

He describes two scenarios in which individuals may decide to exit (mental or physical) or voice their concerns for political change. Individual's decisions to leave or resist is determined by their rational evaluation of the costs and benefits involved. Hirschman's main contribution to the debate is the factor of loyalty, which was missing in both the

traditional and rational models of participation. The loyalty factor can influence an individual's choice to participate in a group action or not.

According to Jenkins (1983), a multi-factor approach is necessary to study movement formation because group actions don't form because of one or two specific reasons. He provides a threshold model of movement formation. The threshold model suggests that all specific reasons, including grievances, organization and opportunities, should be present at a threshold level in order for a movement to form. Also, tangible and intangible assets are needed for the mobilization of groups, where tangible assets include money, facility and the means of communication. Intangible assets refer to "human" assets. Jenkins (1983) provides an explanation of two models for the organization of a social movement:

i) Proponents of a centralized bureaucratic model: social movements are a result of modernization. e.g. professional Social Movement Organizations (SMOs). Such social movements are aimed at institutional change.

ii) Proponents of the decentralized, informal model: These kinds of social movements are known as leaderless group actions, which are aimed at system change.

Jenkins argues that SMOs mostly fall between the bureaucratic and decentralized models to reap the benefits of both models as needed for their goals.

Resource mobilization theorists are mostly focused on liberal democratic settings, and do not provide any justification for the formation of social movements in non-democratic settings. Therefore there is a need to apply the existing approaches to social movements and group actions in authoritarian and one-party systems to see whether they will produce similar results (Jenkins 1983). Furthermore, Jenkins (1983) believes in the role of mass media in making and breaking social movements. A lot has been debated on the problem of "free

rider" in a group action. The free rider problem refers to a situation in which individuals benefit from the efforts of others without paying the cost for that benefit (Olson 1965). Think about a situation when some people manage to ride public transportation for free while others are paying the price for tickets so that the public service continues functioning. Similarly, some individuals may decide not to join a group action or social movement thinking that they will eventually benefit from others' sacrifices and hard work. In discussing the problem of "free ride" (Olson 1965) in a group action, Jenkins (1993) observes that sometimes free riders do not join a movement because of ignorance or because they were not communicated by the movement organizations.

Using the analogy of Isaac Newton's micro level versus Albert Einstein's macro level physics, Boudreau and Meyer (2009) emphasize the need for a larger, contextual understanding of how social movements relate to other political phenomena, enabling the development of broader comparisons across political contexts. Boudreau & Meyer (2009) divide the literature on social movements in three stages. During the first stage, most of the literature of the 1960s studied social movements using the rational choice approach (that individuals strategically analyze costs and benefits to join a group action), and focused on the "group size" and "collective action" factors (e.g. Olson 1970). In the second stage in the 1970s, scholars challenged the rational choice model by arguing that this model does not explain social movements like the gay rights movement, environmental, peace and feminist movements. These scholars argue that social movements were both alternative and additional modes of decentralization in advanced and post-industrialized societies. In other words, the rational choice model, which is based on "wanting more rather than less of a good," does not provide solid justification for social movements that emerged in industrialized societies. For

example, gay rights movements, feminist movements, and environment-related social movements do not fit into the economic logic of rational choice model as the participants of these movements seem to be motivated on ideological grounds rather than rational or economic reasons.

The third stage began at almost the same time in the 1970s, when another group of scholars studied political rebellions and revolutions, and argued that revolutionary campaigns emerged when the economy's capacity to deliver benefits was outstripped by growing expectations. Tilly (1990) & Tarrow (1998) advanced the idea of "contentious politics" that helped distinguish "reform-oriented" social movements and "revolution-oriented" social movements in terms of the outcomes of these movements.

Boudreau & Mayer (2009) suggest that the study of social movements should be divided into two categories, which include, social movements in the global North (Western, developed societies), and social movements in the global South (developing societies). These scholars observed that most of the social movement-related work is conducted in the United States within a Western perspective. These movements differ in nature from the social movements in the developing world. In order to understand the nature of social movements in the global South, we need to focus on the interaction of challengers and authorities through actions of resistance and repression.

Thus, protest movements in wealthier settings may result in greater openness in the policymaking process and the willingness of authorities to resolve grievances. These movements advocate broader policy reforms. However, protest movements in weaker states or poorer settings may have very different outcomes because policy reform is less likely in such settings. Since, such movements may result in unresolved grievances on the part of

challengers; these movements advocate broader displacement goals, which could result in regime change and even revolutions. Boudreau & Mayer (2009) suggest that the comparison between the global North and the global South may provide the basis for some of the broader comparisons in the field. Thinking in terms of Boudreau and Mayer's (2009) logic to social movements, we can make a case that the political uprisings in the three countries were aimed at system change, not to reform it.

Social Movements in Pakistan, Egypt, & Tunisia

For this dissertation, the contentious social movements that were agitating for political change in the three countries were studied. The following paragraphs present some examples of social movements that used social media (YouTube) as an alternative to the government-controlled mass media. This dissertation uses generalized titles to describe each social movement in order to maintain the anonymity of the political actors involved in these movements. For example, instead of describing specific groups involved in the political uprising of 2007 in Pakistan, I will use the title "Lawyers' Movement." This poses no risk of identifying any particular actor involved in this movement.

Social Movements in Pakistan

Since its independence in 1947, Pakistan witnessed the rise of a number of religious, political, and secular social movements (Rashid 2008). In fact, the creation of Pakistan itself was the result of a contentious social movement, "The All-India Muslim League," against British rule (Jalal 1994). The movement started under the leadership of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, also known as the founder of Pakistan, and demanded a separate state for the Muslims of British-India (Ahmed 1997). The movement found its dream on August 14, 1947 when the British decided to divide Indian subcontinent into two countries, Pakistan and India

(Malik 2008). After the creation of Pakistan, the country witnessed the emergence of a number of social movements and political uprisings, both successful and unsuccessful ones. Some of these include: The 1969 political uprising in former "East Pakistan" (Bangladesh) to seek independence from the "West Pakistan, the Islamic movement known as "Jama'ati Islami Pakistan," the Lawyers' Movement of 2007, the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy of 2007, and Tehreek-e-Taliban, Pakistan, which started after the 9/11 and is still a major threat to the country's existence (Lieven 2011; Arif 2010; Rashid 2008; Tehranian 1990). Of these, two movements, the Lawyers' Movement and the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, were initiated simultaneously in 2007 (Traub 2008). Both of these movements were aimed at political change, and merged into one when the Lawyers' Movement gained momentum in its efforts to restore the deposed Chief Justice of Pakistan (Hashim 2012).

The Lawyers' Movement was later joined by protesters and civil society organizations (NGOs). The Lawyers' Movement, which later turned into mass political protests throughout the country, used social media (YouTube) as an alternative to the traditional media because President Musharraf had banned the entire broadcast media from covering any political protests against his regime (Ricchiardi 2012). Unable to withstand the ever-increasing protests against his regime, President Musharraf transferred powers to a democratically elected government in 2008, and fled the country to avoid prosecution (BBC News 2009).

Social Movements in Egypt

Egypt witnessed the rise of a number of social movements, which used social media to promote revolution. These groups included: The Muslim Brotherhood, the Rebel

Movement, the Egyptian Popular Current, the National Association for Change, Revolutionary Youth Coalition, The April 6 Youth Movement, Kefaya, and We are All Khaled Said (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2014). The "April 6 Youth Movement" of 2008 was among the most prominent information activists who used Facebook to organize and protest against poor economic conditions in the country (Bahgat, El-Mahdi et al. 2012). President Mubarak's regime was successful in crushing the movement by using force and strict censorship laws. The Egyptian Movement for Change (Kefaya) that started in 2004 was also aimed at political change in the country. Kifaya, which means "Enough" in Arabic, was a "coalition of political forces united only by a shared call for an end to President Hosni Mubarak's rule" (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2014). This dissertation, however, will focus on the social movement commonly known as the "Arab Spring" of Egypt. It may be mentioned here that the online social movement, "We are all Khalid Said" that was started in 2010 via a Facebook page had over 500,000 likes and was later joined by protesters of all walks of life.

Social Movements in Tunisia

The so-called Jasmine Revolution of Tunisia, that was started with the self-immolation of Tunisian street vendor, and was aimed at changing the regime of President Ben Ali. A coalition of social movements made up of the Lawyers' Union, Labor Unions, and Student Movements, which were involved in information activism and street protests. Thinking in terms of Tarrow's (1998) perspective of contentious politics, it may be argued that all the three social movements being studied for this dissertation are part of contentious social movements.

The Role of Communication in Social Movements

Scholars of political science and communications agree on the inevitable role of the communications media in forming and sustaining social movements that emerge for all kind of political and/or social purposes. Studying the media coverage of SDS-Students for a Democratic Society- the antiwar movement in the United States in the 1960s, Gitlin (2003) observed that the mass media have the power to shape a social movement's narrative. In fact, he believes that journalists and the mass media hold the exclusive power to validate a social movement and determine whether a movement's goals and objectives matter to the society. Since Gitlin's work covers the antiwar social movement of the 1960s when the Internet and online social media did not exist, his book, *The World is Watching* attributes absolute power to the mass media in shaping the narrative of social movements. Gitlin's (2003) work provides a good example of top-down model of journalism where journalists and their newsrooms routines reinforced the hegemonic norms and roles of a society (Berkowitz 1997; Gitlin 2003; Robinson 2011). As a result of technological developments and networked social media, the top-down model of journalism is no more applicable because of the audiences' ability to shape their own narratives in the online world (Robinson 2011; Singer 2011).

In order to understand the role of communication in protest politics, the works by Hirschman (1970), Lohmann (1994), and Tarrow (1998) on social movements are of critical importance. This review of these seminal theoretical works will help explain how these theorists are helpful in the study of the role of digital communication during the political upheavals in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt.

Hirschman's Perspective of "Voice"

In his seminal work, *Exit, Voice and, Loyalty,* Hirschman (1970) used economic logic to explain people's choices and responses to the decline of organizations, states, or firms. According to Hirschman, individuals' choices to leave or complain depend upon the level of choice and freedom they have. Using the analogy of a firm's decline, he adds that people may chose two possible options in response to the decline of an organizations: Exit, which means to leave the organization, and Voice, which means to resist or complain to reverse the decline. However, the interplay of the "loyalty" factor can affect these two situations. The following paragraphs will explain the interplay of loyalty factor in a relatively more elaborative way.

Hirschman's (1970) argument can be understood using the following example: Let us think about a situation in which consumers of a product decide to stop buying the product because of its declining quality. Consumers will most probably shift to another product if alternate choices are available in the market. Thus, in order to switch to another product, they need to have competitive options available in the market; if there is no competition, there is no exit. The second condition is that consumers may decide to opt for "voice," which means to complain against the decline in the quality of the product in order to reverse it. This situation is possible only if (i) they are loyal to the product, and/or (ii) they don't have alternate options available to them in the market (Hirschman 1970).

Since the study's focus is on political activism in Pakistan (2007), Egypt and Tunisia (2010/11), it will interpret Hirschman's (1970) elements (Exit and Voice) in the context of a country's decline instead of that of a product or a corporation. Looking carefully at the Hirschman model of participation and collective action, we come up with five basic elements

that need to be considered in the context of demonstrations in the three countries under study: Exit, Voice, Loyalty, Level of choice, and Level of freedom. For this investigation, I will base my arguments on these five elements. The element of *Voice* will be interpreted as "digital communication." It will explore whether YouTube's spreadable videos of political protests gave "Voice" to social movements in the three countries.

Tarrow's Perspective of Contentious Social Movements

In his work on resource mobilization theorists, Tarrow (1998) argues that people "engage in contentious politics when patterns of political opportunities and constraints change and then, by strategically employing a repertoire of collective action, create new opportunities, which are used by others in widening cycles of contention" (Tarrow 1998, p. 19). For him, the political opportunity structure, cultural and ideological frames, and structures of mobilization are the three main concepts that pave the way for the formation of a social movement. 1) Political opportunity structure, in Tarrow's theorization of social movements, refers to five elements including: increasing access of individuals to participation, political instability, divided elite, repression and facilitation, and influential allies. Tarrow argues that political opportunity structures are not static and may change with the changing circumstances. 2) Cultural & Ideological Frames: refer to new but familiar symbols, slogans, themes used by protesters/political activists that resonate with individuals' belief system in order to mobilize them for participating and sustaining a social movement. The scholar argues that "social movements attempt to replace a dominant belief system that legitimizes the status quo with an alternative mobilizing belief system that supports collective action for change, movement leaders proffer the symbols of revolt to gain support and mark themselves off from opponents" (p. 106). 3) Structure of Mobilization: refers to a kind of resource or a "delicate balance between formal organization and autonomy" that brings "people together in the field, shape coalitions, confront opponents, and assure their own future after the exhilaration of the peak of mobilization has passed" (p. 123).

To put it another way, changes in the political opportunity structure create incentives for collective action; while cultural and ideological frames contribute toward sustaining

protests by justifying, dignifying and animating collective action. Formal movement organizations develop if they are able to mobilize existing dense networks of people.

Tarrow (1998) further argues that collective challenge, common purpose, social solidarity, and sustained interaction with opponents and authorities are the four basic properties of a social movement. In other words, a collective action does not become a social movement unless sustained (for example, Gandhi's non-violent civil disobedience movement against British rule, the Civil Rights movement in the US, and the recent Arab Spring uprisings in the Middle East), and a social movement involves action against powerful opponents. Thus, Tarrow (1998) took the debate on collective action and social movements beyond economic logic. His main contribution to the literature is his idea of contention in social movements. He also discussed the importance of cultural and ideological frames for the sustainability of social movements.

According to Tarrow (1998), changes in political opportunities and constraints create incentives for people to participate in contentious politics, and by strategically employing the collective action repertoire, they create new opportunities, which are used by others in widening cycles of contention. Tarrow (1998) argues that when poor people originate contentious politics, they lack money and other expensive resources to support their campaigns, and use contention as a vehicle for their collective actions. He provides three kinds of contentions: 1) Violence, which is visible, but has the risk of scaring off sympathizers; 2) Disruptions, which involve marches and rallies, and have a tendency to become violent; 3) Conventional contention, which involves protests and other conventional forms of campaigns.

In order to apply Tarrow's (1998) theorizing to the case of political uprisings in the countries under study, let's take two important elements of his theory: political opportunity structure, and contention. Tarrow (1998) believes that we need to have some sort of political opportunity for political activism. Most of the time, such political opportunities appear when there is a divided elite. For example, the origin of the Arab Spring 2011 is mostly traced to an incident of December 18, 2010 when a Tunisian street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi doused himself with gasoline and then self-immolated as a protest against police torture and corruption (Mir 2011). The image of this "burning man" spread quickly over the digital media and was seen everywhere in the world. A strong case can be made that Bouazizi's self-immolation served as a political opportunity that the online activists used to form a social uprising. However, in that particular case, the ruling elite was not yet divided. This investigation intends to explore "political opportunity structures" in Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt's political uprisings even though there was no divided elite in the three countries. This will help find out whether the presence of YouTube in the three countries can be seen as an opportunity for citizens to engage in a political activism.

Furthermore, Tarrow (1998) argues that contentious social movements are aimed at challenging the status quo so they need new slogans to mobilize potential challengers. These slogans, which he terms "cultural and ideological frames," should be compatible with the people's ideologies so that they can identify themselves with these frames. He adds that the mass media can spread these cultural and ideological frames and magnify the grievances of people in order to get potential sympathizers against the status quo. The study assumes that YouTube protest videos helped magnify cultural and ideological frames and the messages of grievances and solidarity used by the social movements in the three countries.

Lohmann's Perspective of "Informational Cascades"

In her seminal work, "The Dynamics of Informational Cascades: The Monday demonstrations in Leipzig, East Germany, 1989-91," Susanne Lohmann (1994) interprets political demonstrations as "informational cascade." Since the mass media are not free in authoritarian regimes, people do not get the accurate information about the nature of the regime. However, Lohmann believes, political demonstrations in this kind of situation serve as "informational cascade" for other people by making "public some of the previously hidden information about the nature of the regime" (p. 44). Lohmann explains the dilemma of people for not having accurate information about their authoritarian regime this way:

> In their daily interactions with the regime, some people have positive experiences, others negative ones. Since these are private experiences, it is possible that the status quo regime is maintained by a sufficiently large number of people who are imperfectly informed, whereas it would collapse if some or all of the dispersed negative information were to become publicly known. There are then multiple senders and receivers. The set of senders coincides with that of the receivers, consisting of the entire population. Thus, although each sender and receiver has only imperfect information about the status quo regime, in the aggregate the population is well informed." (p. 50)

In other words, when a group of political activists come out on streets against its rulers, it threatens the status quo as the observers of these political protests get the information about people's unhappiness with a particular regime. For example, during the Tunisian uprisings of 2010/11, when protesters in Siddi Bouzid started coming out on streets against the President Ben Ali, other people in the rest of the country got the information that something was wrong with the regime, and so they started joining the protests in different parts of the country.

While providing an historical account of East Germany's political struggle, Lohmann (1994) reviewed different theories of mass political action by examining the suppression of mass discontent in East Germany over the period 1949-89, as well as the critical events and external political changes in the late 1980s. She also analyzed the East German revolution and its aftermath and used the evidence to evaluate the theories of mass political action. To build her model of "Informational cascade," Lohmann (1994) relies on the rational choice approach. According to the rational choice approach, people do not join a protest movement randomly rather they decide to join a protest movement based on their participation incentive. She argues that the aggregate turnout of protesters over time serve as an informational cascade for people who extract benefit-cost information from these aggregate turnouts regarding who is turning out in these protests. She argues that the aggregate turnout and who is turning out (radicals of moderates) of protest movements can inform the public about the negative experience of individuals about a regime. Let's take the example of political protests in Pakistan, and consider, what signal does it send to middle class Pakistanis who might be deciding whether or not to tolerate the military regime if 30,000 migrant workers from Waziristan hold demonstrations on the streets of Islamabad versus 30,000 lawyers? The informative role of these political protests sends a signal to potential challengers whether it's just the radicals in large numbers protesting against the regime, or are the moderates (like Pakistani lawyers movement) turning out for the demonstrations as well. Using the example of East German protests during the period 1989-1991 in Leipzig, Lohmann (1994) argued that the success of one protest sent signals to others who joined similar protests.

In the light of Lohmann's logic of Informational cascade, this dissertation assumes that during their respective political crises in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia, political protests served as informational cascades. These informational cascades were sending signals not only to potential protestors, but also to the ruling elites simultaneously because of the following reason: when political protests in the three countries started, armed forces and authoritarian regimes were not divided and acted together to curb the ongoing political unrests. However, the ever-increasing aggregate turnout of these protests under study, served as "signals" of information to the ruling elite that they cannot curb these protests by force, which later created rifts among rulers themselves. For example, in Pakistan, President Musharraf lost the support of military when he could not curb the protests by force, and had to quit eventually. Similar were the cases with Egypt, and Tunisia where the President Mubarak and the President Ben Ali had to give up their reigns after the armed forces withdrew their support.

Lohmann's (1994) informational cascade echoes the concept of "icons of outrage," presented by Perlmutter (1998). According to Perlmutter (1998), sometimes certain images become the center of public and elite attention because of their uniqueness. To define such images, he introduced the term "Icons of Outrage," that differentiates ordinary images from the ones that have the tendency to generate public and elite discourse and or upheavals. According to Perlmutter (1998), images that have the tendency to become icons of outrage must have following elements: celebrity, prominence, frequency, profit, instantaneousness, transposability, fame of subjects, importance of events, metonymy, primordiality and/or cultural resonance, and striking composition. Out of these elements, transposability, fame of subjects, importance of events, metonymy, primordiality and/or cultural resonance seem to

be most relevant to Lohmann's "signals" of informational cascade model. To elaborate it further let's look at the definitions of these elements. *Transposability* in Perlmutter's (1998) icons of outrage refers to icons that "are often replicated across media" (p. 14). Both *Fame of subjects & Importance of Events* correspond to the significance of an icon, which is tied to important social events or historical occurrences. *Metonymy* refers to an image's ability to represent a greater event because of its "summing up" quality. For example, the images of planes hitting the World Trade Center on September 11, 2011 can be considered as "Metonymy." *Primordiality and/or cultural resonance* suggest an icon's ability to resonate with our common cultural history. In Islamic traditions and culture, the image of *Kaaba* (the Holy place for Muslims in Mecca where they gather every year to perform pilgrimage) fulfills the quality of "Primordiality." When these basic conditions are met, any image still or moving may have the ability to fulfill Lohmann's (1994) "signals" of information in her informational cascade model.

Thinking in terms of Perlmutter's icons of outrage, the study assumes that during the political uprisings in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia, certain images in the form of YouTube video clips became icons of outrage among citizens. These helped the formation and sustainability of social movements in the three countries. One example of such images can be self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi. The image travelled with the speed of light to the rest of the world, resulting in online and offline political activism inside and outside of Tunisia.

Also, Lohmann's (1994) argument of the cycle of protests (that the aggregate turnout of a protest leads to the formation of another protest) also resonates with Tarrow's idea of cycle of contentions, which means the success of a contentious collective action in a political uprising may lead to other similar protests. Simply put, both scholars look at the political

uprisings, not as random occurrences, but as a process in which success of one protest movement will pave the way for another. Furthermore, according to Lohmann (1994), the reaction of people to the negative information about a regime depends upon the nature of the regime. For example, if people in a democratic setting get negative information such as governmental corruption, they may demand a change of leadership, but not the system. However, single-party or authoritarian regimes where freedom of speech and expression are prohibited, do not entertain such negative information. Once negative public opinion against such regimes is created, the status quo gets unstable.

In summary, after surveying Hirschman, Tarrow and Lohmann's theories on social movements and political participation, we note that all three scholars see a role for communication in successful social movements. Where Hirschman sees the role of communication in the form of "Voice," Tarrow and Lohmann observe its utility in amplifying grievances by sharing cultural and ideological frames via the mass media.

Research Questions

Based on the literature reviewed, the study explored a number of questions. From the discussion on protest politics and social movements, we know that Tarrow (1998) suggests that social movements form when people get information about the existence of a "political opportunity," and social movements are sustained when people have the ability to share "cultural and ideological frames/grievances." This speaks to the political, cultural and media contexts of the protests. The study therefore investigated the following questions:

RQ 1. What were the "political opportunity structures" that became apparent during the crises in the three countries under study?

Furthermore, the expression, "political opportunity" implies having the information, and the ability to share that information. This brings up the question:

RQ 2. What were the cultural and ideological frames deployed by protesters and activists in YouTube videos?

According to Lohmann's (1994) Informational Cascade model, individual participants' decisions [to join a political protest] may depend on changes in aggregate turnout over time because people extract benefit-cost information from turnout members. As stated earlier, the study explores whether the most "spreadable" amateur videos of political protests on YouTube were involved in sending signals to others (potential challengers) to join protests. The term "potential challengers" refers to those people who are not part of participating in protests, but are sympathizers to the protesters. Since these sympathizers have the tendency to join political protests, they are known as potential challengers (Lohmann 1994; Rohlinger and Brown 2009). It may be mentioned here that YouTube video statistics provide information about the locations where a particular video was watched the most. Keeping in

mind this informative role of these political protests, the study wants to explore following questions:

RQ 3. How were the "most viewed" videos of political protests on YouTube part of the "Informational Cascade" during the political uprisings in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt?

RQ 4. Was *Al-Jazeera* a major player in the "informational cascade" that took place on YouTube during the political uprisings in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt?

In his work *Exit, Voice and, Loyalty,* Hirschman (1970) provides two possible options that people may chose in response to the decline of an organization: Exit, which means to leave the organization, and Voice, which means to resist or complain to reverse the decline. Thinking in terms of Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt where people had opted to resist against their authoritarian regimes, the study investigated the following question:

RQ 5. How did YouTube videos of political protests serve as a "voice" during the political crises in the three countries under study?

From the discussion on "icons of outrage" (Perlmutter 1998), we understand that sometimes certain images (moving or still) become the center of public and elite attention because of their uniqueness. The "icons of outrage" idea differentiates ordinary images from the ones that have the tendency to generate public and elite discourse and or upheavals. In order to determine the iconic YouTube video clips that may have influenced the political uprisings during the crises, the study posed the following question:

RQ 6. What were the metonymic YouTube images for each revolution?

In addition to these research questions, this study wanted to explore the patterns of content and themes within the videos of each country. In other words, this dissertation is interested in finding out common patterns and themes between the videos of each country

(Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt). This will help further understand and explain why some videos of protests achieved the status of "most viewed" among hundreds of other such videos already available on YouTube. It will also provide me an opportunity to find out if there were any similar patterns of content among the top 20 videos of each country. To achieve these goals, the study asked the RQ # 7 that explores the nature of content among the top 20 videos of Pakistan. Similarly, it explores the nature of content among the top 20 videos of Tunisia, and the nature of content among the top 20 videos of Egypt.

RQ 7. Were there (a) any patterns of content among the top 20 videos for each country and (b) similar patterns across the countries?

The next research question (RQ 8) explores the possibility of common patterns of content and themes among the top 60 videos of the three countries. The answer to this question will help us understand whether the most viewed videos in the three countries share any common themes and patterns.

RQ 8. Did these content themes coincide across the videos of the three countries under investigation?

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Overview

In order to address the first six research questions (from RQ 1 to RQ 6), this study uses a descriptive visual content analysis approach (Dale 1935; Berelson 1952; Baxter, Riemer et al. 1985; Perlmutter 1999; Neuendorf 2002; Krippendorff 2004). Descriptive visual content analysis refers to the procedures that are employed to "systematically code, characterize, observe, and quantify the representations within the population of video clips meeting set criteria" (Rutledge 2009, p. 7). An exploratory or descriptive visual content analysis of selected YouTube video clips helped identify commonalities that existed between the three countries in the context of the political crises under study in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. Furthermore, because of its exploratory nature, the visual content analysis method provides the researcher an opportunity to look beyond the obvious to find unique themes and patterns that might exist in protest-related videos.

This chapter begins with a brief discussion of visual content analysis. It then offers a detailed description of the data collection and analysis including: the unit of analysis, population and sample selection, search terms used for data collection, the timeframe for each case study, the criteria for selection of videos, coders' training, inter-coder comparability and reliability, and coding guidelines.

The content analysis approach, which gained popularity in the 20th Century, refers to the "various ways of counting words, images, analogies, and contexts" (Krippendorff and Bock 2009, p. 2). Historically, Weber (1910), Mathews (1910), Tenney (1912), George

(1959), and Lasswell (1941) were among the influential scholars who developed and utilized this approach in academic research. Content analysis is so widely used. It is such a valuable and adaptable methodology because of its application to "all kinds of communications—texts, images, interviews, and observational records" (Krippendorff and Bock 2009, p. 2). Communication scholars have developed multiple definitions for this approach. Berelsen's (1952) often-cited definition states that the content analytic method is "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (p. 18). To keep up with the rapid expansion in modes of human communication represented by, for example, the revolution in Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) and the Internet, the historical definition of content analysis needs to be updated to incorporate today's modes of communications to keep this approach relevant in our everyday lives. Babbie (2010) did this by defining content analysis as "the study of recorded human communications, such as books, websites, paintings and laws" (p. 530).

Despite the diversity of content and modes of communication, researchers using the content analysis approach must not undermine the scholarly rigor that makes this method reliable and replicable. Neuendorf (2002) addresses this concern by providing this more comprehensive definition:

> Content analysis is a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity, intersubjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented. (p. 10)

Even though, the requirements for scientific rigor remain the same for all kinds of content analyses, some mass media and communication scholars believe that using the content

analysis approach to study print communications is different from its application in analyzing visual media (Perlmutter 1996; Lindlof and Taylor 2002; Neuendorf 2002). According to Perlmutter (1996), this difference between analysis of words and images reflects the way each medium organizes data. He states that analysis of visual media, whether still or moving images, is more complex and less obvious because:

> [I]mages derive their meanings not only from manifest content (the things and people in the frame) and figurative content (tropes of association and juxtaposition), but also from many formal variables, such as coloring and shading, camera angles, relative sizing, closeness of the shot, fore-and backgrounding, as well as the editing of moving pictures. Some of these elements have verbal analogues in the structure of sentences, or literary tropes; many don't. (p. 53)

In summary, media and communication scholars typically employ the content analysis approach in one of three ways: "Descriptive, hypothesis testing, and *facilitating* inference" (Neuendorf 2002). As discussed elsewhere, this study is an exploratory examination of YouTube videos, and descriptive visual content analysis is the most suitable approach to meet the objectives of this dissertation.

According to Neuendorf (2002), descriptive content analysis methods are attractive in their clarity and parsimony, however, "[i]t needs to be understood that *descriptive* does not always mean *univariate*, that is, describing results one variable at a time. There might be—and often should be—a predicted relationship among variables measured in the content analysis" (p.54). Accordingly, this dissertation uses the descriptive content analysis approach to examine YouTube video clips of political protests in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. Descriptive visual content analysis is not only the proper tool for finding commonalities of themes among the video clips of political protests under study, but it also provides a means of describing and contextualizing multiple angles and observations regarding these videos.

As it has been already discussed in detail in the second chapter, YouTube as a medium has penetrated the three countries so deeply that the citizens of Pakistan, Tunisian, and Egypt have started using YouTube as an alternative to their traditional media. Part of the reason that YouTube gained so much popularity in these societies is that it is a visual medium and can easily replace television whenever dictatorial regimes block the transmissions of TV media. Thus, it is imperative to provide contextual explanation of the YouTube videos analyzed for this study. This takes the interpretations of the analyzed images beyond their "obvious meanings" (Perlmutter 1996), and provides more in-depth analysis of cultural and historical themes associated with these videos of political uprisings in the three countries.

Procedures and Unit of Analysis

Neuendorf (2002) defines a unit of analysis this way:

> [A] *Unit* is an identifiable message or message component, (a) which serves as the basis for identifying the population and drawing a sample, (b) on which variables are measured, (c) or which serves as the basis for reporting analyses. Units can be words, characters, themes, time periods, interactions, or any other result of 'breaking up a communication into bits.' (p. 71)

For this dissertation, which is aimed at identifying common communication patterns among the social movements of Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt, a descriptive visual content analysis of YouTube videos was used. These common patterns may include, but are not limited to: identifying cultural and ideological frames and memes used during the political uprisings, types of contentions employed by the protesters to sustain their social movements, confrontation between the protesters and the security forces, and any other kinds of common patterns and themes that might be found consistent in the videos of protests from the three countries. In order to compare the protest-related visual content of these countries, individual video clips on YouTube were treated as the units of analysis. These individual video clips

were selected by using well-defined criteria that met the aims of the study. Details related to the criteria for the selection of these protest-related YouTube videos will be provided later in this chapter. It is pertinent to mention here that individuals, protesters, media organizations, and other anonymous sources online may have uploaded these YouTube videos.

Case Studies & Time Frames

Pakistan. For Pakistan, the imposition of a state of emergency in November 2007 and subsequent online resistance was used as a case study. At that time the military blocked transmission of private television channels so as to suppress increasing media criticism of President Musharraf's policies and the ongoing political protests. Videos uploaded from Nov. 3, 2007 to Dec. 15, 2007 were collected via the *ContextMiner* campaign created to collect data for Pakistan. The timeframe selected corresponded with the period a state of emergency was imposed by Musharraf, during which the broadcast media were banned. Journalists were not allowed to cover and report any political protest or riot against the military regime during this period.

Tunisia. The second case study is the Tunisian revolution. YouTube videos of Tunisian political protests uploaded by individuals, protesters, social movements, media organizations, etc. from Dec. 17, 2010 (when the Tunisian man burned himself) to Jan. 14, 2011 (when the Tunisian government was overthrown) were searched and analyzed for this investigation.

Egypt. The third case study focuses on the Egyptian revolution. YouTube videos of Egyptian political protests uploaded from Jan. 25, 2011 (when protestors gathered at the Tahrir Square) to Feb. 11, 2011 (when President Hosni Mubarak resigned) will be analyzed for the study.

Language Issues

At least four languages are spoken in the three countries under investigation. These include: Urdu, French, Arabic and English. I am fluent in Urdu and English and has a basic understanding of the Arabic language. However, the researcher lacks the ability to understand French language that is also spoken and understood in Tunisia along with Arabic and English. In order to overcome this challenge and for the purpose of consistency and validity of the research, I studied only English language videos, except for universally recognized Arabic symbols (calligraphic themes) common to all Muslims (like the faith creed: There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet, Allah-o-Akbar (God is Great), etc. Therefore, English was used as the search language. All the keywords that were adopted and entered to create campaigns on *ContextMiner* for data collection purposes were English words. However, I want to acknowledge the possibility of loosing some relevant slogans that were written in French language, particularly in the case of Tunisian videos.

To put things in perspective, the social movements and revolutions being studied for this dissertation were phenomena started by English-speaking elites in the three countries (Ghannam 2011; Harb 2011; Ricchiardi 2012). These elite had access to the Internet and new media technologies including smart phones. Furthermore, many of the elite who posted YouTube videos of protests wanted the rest of the world to know what was going on in their respective countries (Ghannam 2012). Most of them used English because it was the language that would enable their videos to have large online audiences and even go viral. Thus, using English as a language of search and analysis provides better chances of collecting reliable data from online sources such as the *ContextMiner*. In addition to that, since this study is only about the content analysis of visuals, there are very minimal chances

of losing important data that may be present in those visuals in any of the four languages. In other words, adopting the criteria of using only English as the language of search helped maintain the reliability and consistency of this research without causing any hurdles in the visual content analysis of protest-related videos.

Population & Sample

Since YouTube is a social media platform where anyone can upload videos, post comments, and share within the realm of digital world, the overall population of video clips is not fixed. The number and genres of YouTube video clips rapidly increases as mash-ups and remixed versions of already posted videos are added to the networking site (Burgess and Green 2009; Thorson, Ekdale et al. 2010). According to YouTube, "72 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute" (YouTube Stats 2013), and each of these videos represents an array of topics and styles, ranging from music mash-ups, humor, satire, commercials, and political propaganda to random cellphone recorded videos of political crises around the world. Thus, in order to use content analysis techniques on such a huge population of still and moving visuals, one needs to be more creative and strategic in selecting a specific sample. Since this investigation is specifically about political protests in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt during particular timeframes, random sampling from YouTube to attempt to meet this study's objectives would not be appropriate or practical for several reasons. Criteria used for selecting the sample for analysis include: the language of videos, the time and date when a video was uploaded, the topic and genre of the video, the number of views, the number of likes and/or dislikes of a video, the production and uploading source of a video, and the duration of each video. Random sampling does not guarantee finding the "most viewed" (Green and Jenkins 2011) and iconic videos (Perlmutter 1998) of political

protests, which is an important aspect of this investigation. Describing the challenges of applying traditional content analysis techniques to the World Wide Web (WWW) where more than 320 million home pages can be accessed, McMillan (2000) expresses the problem this way:

> The first challenge for the researcher is to identify the units to be sampled. This will be driven by the research question. For example, if the researcher wants to examine a sample of Web sites for Fortune 500 companies, it may be fairly simple to obtain a list of these sites and apply a traditional sampling method (e.g., a table of random numbers, every *n*th item on the list, etc.). But, if one seeks a different kind of sample (e.g., all business Web sites) the task may become more difficult. (Krippendorff and Bock 2009)

In order to overcome this challenge of dealing with the gigantic data set available on YouTube, a representative sample of videos was obtained by using the criteria of "most viewed" videos of political crises in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt (Krippendorff and Bock 2009; Green and Jenkins 2011). In addition, this study used a "purposive or judgment sampling" (Neuendorf 2002) to find the most representative videos of political protests in these countries. According to Neuendorf (2002), this "type of sampling involves the researcher making a decision as to what units he or she deems appropriate to include in the sample" (p.88). Based on these guidelines provided by Neuendorf (2002), the sample size for this dissertation was determined on the basis of the highest number of viewers. YouTube is a limitless archive of videos, and it is not possible to analyze all the protest-related videos that are already available on the social media. Thus, in order to overcome the problem of scrutinizing the gigantic amount of data, the researcher decided to set a threshold of 20 videos with the highest number of views from each country.

The software *Context Miner,* used to collect data, helped measure the highest number of views as it provides flexibility to aggregate search results in terms of their number of

views from highest to the lowest. This way, the top 20 protest-related YouTube videos for each country under investigation, in terms of highest number of viewers, were collected for data analysis. The criteria generated 60 videos of political protests in total, which included 20 videos from each country (See Appendix E).

Search Terms Used for Data Collection

In order to collect YouTube videos of political protests in the three countries, the *ContextMiner* program was used. This software is unique in the sense that it "provides tools to collect data, metadata, and contextual information off the Web by automated crawl" (ContextMiner 2013). The ability of this software to collect YouTube videos on the basis of total number of views, title, category, duration and uploaded dates ensured collection of only items meeting the study criteria for Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt-related videos concerning their respective political crises. The software also has the ability to provide precise information about the number of comments, number of views, and ratings of the selected videos at the time of the search. Furthermore, the software is designed to run search terms as separate "campaigns" while collecting data. These campaigns can be used to collect data from YouTube, blogs, Flickr, Twitter, and inlinks from the Web.

As specified in the instructions for using the data collection software, *ContextMiner,* campaigns can be created with just two easy steps:

1) Enter a name for your campaign

2) Select the sources (i.e., URLs) to query to search for relevant data and contextual information.

For this investigation, three campaigns were created for each country, and associating separate names for each campaign. For Pakistan, the campaign was called "Pakistan's

Political Protests 2007." For Egypt, the title "Political Uprisings in Egypt 2011," was used, and for Tunisia, the campaign was labeled "Tunisian Political uprisings 2010." It may be noted that these campaign titles should not be misinterpreted as the substitute for search terms used to collect data. These titles were helpful in keeping the three campaigns running separately for the purpose of organization and clarity during the data collection process. Once the campaigns were up and running, data were collected by entering keywords into *ContextMiner*'s search engine and locating video clips related to the political protests of Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. These keywords include:

For Pakistan: Pakistan; Pakistani Social Movement for Political Change; Lawyers Social Movement for the Restoration of Chief Justice; Musharraf; Pakistan Protests; Chief Justice; Iftikhar Chaudry; Islamabad Protests.

For Egypt: Egyptian Arab Spring; Egypt; Egyptian Protests; Egyptian Revolution; Egyptian Social Movement for Political Change 2011; Hosni Mubarak; Tahrir Square.

For Tunisia: Tunisian Arab Spring; Jasmine Revolution; Tunisia; Tunisian Protests; Mohamed Bouazizi; Tunisian Burning Man; Tunisian Social Movement for Political Change 2010; Tunisian Revolution; President Zine-El-Abidine, Ben Ali.

Criteria for Selection of Videos

In order to classify a YouTube clip as a protest-related video, the following criteria were used:

i) Clips must have the highest number of viewers, aggregated by the *Context Miner* software. For each country under study, 20 "most viewed" clips (a threshold set by the researcher to acquire the most relevant videos of protests) were selected for the analysis.

ii) Clips must have still or moving images of people protesting against their respective regimes.

iii) Clips must show explicit demonstrations in the representative countries.

iv) Clips must be realistic in nature. In other words, caricatures, comic and/or satirical videos were not entertained as protest-related YouTube clips for this study.

The first criterion regarding the highest number of viewers actually speaks to the study's objective of investigating the "most viewed" video clips on YouTube. As stated earlier, the software used to collect data helped measure the highest number of views as it provides a flexibility to aggregate search results in terms of their number of views from highest to the lowest. The highest number of views of any YouTube video clip of political protests suggests it was most watched, disseminated, and commented upon – i.e., it is a "most viewed" video.

The second criterion was adopted to ensure only the most relevant video clips that conform to the study's objective are selected. Since YouTube is a unique platform, it provides access to a gigantic archive of videos. Whenever a search term is used on YouTube's search engine, it brings so many results, both relevant and irrelevant, that it is extremely important for a researcher to follow strict criteria to remain focused on the study objectives. For example, during the data collection process, the researcher came across many YouTube videos that were titled as "protests in Tunisia," but in fact most of the content of those videos was about Libyan and Syrian protests.

The third criterion is actually an extension of the second. During the data collection process, any videos of political protests that were vague in nature, and did not provide any concrete evidence regarding their relation to a specific country/nation were eliminated from the search. For example, sometimes during data collection the search terms used for Egypt

brought Libyan protests as results, and other times, it was not even possible to determine whether protesters were from Tunisia or Egypt. In order to overcome possible confusion and keep the data reliable, any videos that did not provide enough information to determine its country of origin was removed from the search.

The fourth criterion was adopted to make sure only realistic videos of political protests would be analyzed. This criterion was adopted after several animated videos of Presidents Mubarak, Musharraf, and Ben Ali were returned while using the search terms described above. This criterion helped safeguard the investigation as some of the animated videos had a greater number of viewers than the realistic ones, and so could be easily interpreted as the "most viewed" ones in the absence of the fourth criterion.

Once the video clips were obtained, the "most viewed" videos were determined based on the highest number of viewers. The top 20 video clips for each country, in terms of highest number of viewers, were collected for data analysis in descending-views order. As previously noted, any videos that did not meet all criteria were excluded from the data set and analysis. At the end of this process, the 20 most-viewed videos from each country that met the selection criteria, for a total of 60 videos, were identified for downloading and analysis.

Videos Downloaded

All videos collected as a result of the set criteria were downloaded on Feb. 25, 2013. A special code provided by *ContextMiner* was used to download these videos (ContextMiner 2013). All the selected videos were downloaded to an external hard drive. Screenshots of each video's statistics were taken to document the YouTube data on that clip and to reduce any chance of losing the valuable supplementary data for this study, which might occur if a

video clip is no longer available on YouTube. In addition, supplementary information related to length, title, ratings, uploading date, number of viewers of each video was recorded separately. Only downloaded videos meeting the pre-established criteria were analyzed.

Coding Guidelines for Descriptve Content Analysis

In order to design the coding scheme for this dissertation, two studies on visual content analysis were reviewed. The study by Perlmutter (1996) investigated portrayal of China in US print media. For his investigation, Perlmutter (1996) focused on China-related still images for an extended period of time. The second study by Rutledge (2009) specifically investigated the role of YouTube videos as a strategic communication tool by the Iraqi insurgents after 2003. While designing a unique coding scheme, some of the most relevant content categories from these two studies were used. The coding scheme for this study contains 51 content categories (variables) (See Appendix D). Some of these variables were adopted from the two studies mentioned earlier, while others were exclusively designed to achieve the purpose of this investigation. For a detailed look at the numbers and types of variables, see Appendix B & C.

Furthermore, a comprehensive codebook was designed for this study that provided detailed coding guidelines including the "operationalization of terms, basic standards for coding videos and a description of each variable being measured" (Rutledge 2009, p. 67). See Appendix A & B for coding guidelines and clarification of terminologies used for this study.

Researchers' Training & Inter-coder Reliability

In order for a research design to be reliable and replicable, it is important to achieve a high level of inter-coder reliability. According to Berelson (1952), a high level "consistency"

is the most important element for researchers to "produce the same results when they apply the same set of categories to the same content" (p.171). For this study, inter-coder reliability was measured before starting the coding of the data used for analysis.

For inter-coder reliability, 20 percent more videos (four protest-related YouTube videos from each country) were obtained from YouTube by using the following search-terms: "protests," "Arab Spring," "Pakistan," "Tunisia" and "Egypt." These 12 sample videos were used for the training of coders and for assessing inter-coder reliability, not for actual study/coding (Riffe, Lacy et al. 1998). Once these sample videos were obtained, they were stored in two separate jump drives (one for the researcher and one for the graduate student helping with the inter-coder reliability). Also, online links for these sample videos were kept as a backup in a separate Microsoft Word document (See Appendix F).

An international graduate student from the University of Iowa, Department of Journalism & Mass Communication, volunteered to help with the inter-coder reliability. Since the graduate student had no prior knowledge of the study and was not aware of the Islamic symbols (such as images of *Kaaba*, the mosque of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), and written slogans like "Allah-o-Akber," (God is great) and cultural perspectives. Extensive training of the second coder took place before coding started in order to ensure inter-coder reliability. The second coder was shown the images of important religious symbols of Islam including images of the *Kaaba*, a sacred home for Muslims located in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, the mosque of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Every year Muslims from all around the world gather at these two holy places to perform a pilgrimage. Traditionally, Muslims use the images of these holy places in order to connect to their fellow Muslims around the world. For example, the Muslims of British India used very similar

religious slogans and images during their independence movement in 1947 (Al-Mujahid 1982; Sayeed and George 1994; AlSayyad and Castells 2002). During the training, the researcher also played audio and visual clips of Muslims calling to prayer, known as the *Adhan* to make sure that the second coder had the ability to understand religious references while coding the protest-related video clips. This entire training took three two-hour sessions. All three training sessions were conducted in the main library of the University of Iowa and were completed within a week during the month of March 2013. (See Appendices A, B & C for codebook and coding guidelines).

After the extensive training and clarification of terms, the researcher and the graduate student coded the 12 sample videos separately. Once the coding of the sample videos was completed, the entire data set was entered into SPSS software. For the purpose of inter-coder reliability, "percentage of agreement" was used (Neuendorf 2002). According to Neuendorf (2002), the percentage of agreement is used when all variables are categorical and not continuous, adding, "*Agreement* looks at whether or not coders agree as to the precise values assigned to a variable across a set of units—it looks at hits and misses" (pp.144). Describing the formula for percentage agreement, Neuendorf (2002) says that the percent agreement "is a simple percentage, representing number of agreements divided by total number of measures" (pp.149). The formula used to measure inter-coder reliability in terms of percent agreement for this study is as follows:

$$PA^{o}=A/n$$

Where "PA^{o} stands for 'proportion agreement, observed,' A is the number of agreements between two coders, and n is the total number of units the two coders have coded for the test" (Neuendorf 2002, p. 149).

During the coding process to test the inter-coder reliability of the 12 sample videos, both the graduate student and the researcher found three content categories 39, 40, and 41 ("Focus on Pakistan; Focus on Egypt; and Focus on Tunisia") as overlapping the content categories 16, 17, and 18 ("Top Locations: Pakistan; Egypt; Tunisia") on the codebook. After a thorough discussion, both coders resolved the issue by replacing the three categories on the codebook with "Mention of Pakistan; Mention of Egypt; and Mention of Tunisia." While coding for the inter-coder reliability test, both the researcher and the second coder agreed that this new category carries significant value in investigating whether there exists any connection between the three political uprisings that took place at three different times. Also, content category 50 "Presence of Religious Slogans" was merged with content category 56 "Religious Appeal." Taking this measure helped overcome any chances of redundancy and overlaps that the coders might face while coding for the inter-coder reliability. Once the codebook was updated and the 12 sample videos were coded, using the formula of the percent agreement, the overall inter-coder reliability was measured as 96 percent, with N=396. The inter-coder reliability was calculated using SPSS software.

Coding Procedures for Descriptive Content Analysis

Once inter-coder reliability was established, coding of all 60 video clips that were downloaded was started along with securing their online links in a separate Microsoft Word document (See Appendix E). The entire coding of selected video clips was performed using the researcher's laptop that was equipped with QuickTime and *VLC Media* players. The downloaded videos were stored in a 1TB external hard drive from where they were accessed and watched as many times as needed without need for an Internet connection.

The videos were coded in a separate carrel located in the main library of the University of Iowa. This peaceful and quiet environment was chosen to avoid any kind of distractions that might affect the researcher's ability to watch and analyze these videos carefully. Furthermore, each video was watched more than once so as to obtain accuracy of the video's content while coding. Also, watching each video more than one time (five to six times in some cases) helped the researcher to avoid missing any important observations.

Paper coding sheets were used in coding (see Appendix C & D). A print copy of the codebook was always available during the coding of videos for easy reference on terms and instructions (See Appendix A). The paper coding sheets (Appendix C & D) were organized and kept in separate stacks, one for each of the countries in this study. Each stack of coding sheets was named for the country being analyzed. For example, the stack of coding sheets used to code YouTube videos of Tunisian protests was named "Tunisia." This procedure helped maintain order and prevent confusion. It also made it easier to revisit coded data for each particular case to look for patterns, commonalities, and differences among the videos concerning the protests in the three countries under investigation. Once all the videos were analyzed and coded on these paper sheets, the collected data were input into the SPSS software for the purpose of statistical analysis.

Goal of The Research Design

As described earlier, the goal for this investigation was to find commonalities that potentially existed among videos of political protests in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt that had been uploaded to YouTube. The descriptive statistics of the content analysis was used to compare the "most viewed" videos posted on the social media site during the political protests among the chosen countries/case studies. Once the data were collected on paper

coding sheets, the data were input into SPSS software to run basic statistics and analyze the content categories to understand and explore the role and content of YouTube during the political upheavals under investigation.

Operationalization & Clarification of Terms

This section provides explanation for only those content categories that need to be clarified to fully achieve the purpose of this study. For example, on the coding sheet, the content category "Number of Times Viewed" is obvious and does not require a comprehensive explanation in order to get it right by all the coders. Coders can simply look at the stats provided by YouTube and note it on the coding sheet for this variable. However, content categories such as emotional, religious and nationalistic appeals require further explanation and how they should be operationalized for the coding purposes.

For the purpose of this study, the content category, "Uploaded by Media Organization," refers to a protest-related video clip that was uploaded to YouTube by a traditional media source such as a TV network or newspaper website. The video clip may or may not be produced by the traditional media. This category determines the disseminating source of a video, not the production source. During the literature review of this study, it was observed that the Arabic TV network, *Al-Jazeera*, disseminated amateur video clips via its *Mubasher* website. This content category will help in understanding whether traditional media sources such as *Al-Jazeera* were also relying on YouTube to disseminate the narrative of protests in the three countries.

The content category "Victim Type" is aimed at identifying who is being targeted in a protest-related video. In the video clips, victim types may be dead or alive, injured, and/or shown as being beaten by the security forces. If the victims in the video clips are shown as

workers/activists of some humanitarian/non-government organizations, they will fall under the category of "Victim Type: NGO." Furthermore, the number of victims from organized groups such as NGOs and religious groups will help determine the nature of protests: organized group protests versus unorganized protests.

For this study, the content category, "Production Source of Video" determines whether the protest-related videos are produced by traditional media sources or by amateurs. The term "Media Sources" refers to the protest-related videos produced by professional media organizations such as *Al-Jazeera, CNN, BBC*, etc. The word, "Amateur," on the other hand, means that the source is a private party or operates under anonymous names.

Another content category, "Presence of Readable Signage" refers to posters with readable language, placards, letters, documents, signs, and legible clothing (t-shirt, headbands), and architectural signs visible within video clips and containing readable words to a speaker of the language (Perlmutter 1996). This term is expanded, for comprehensiveness, to cover words appearing cartoons (e.g. dialogue) or maps or charts.

The content categories regarding the mentions of Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt look for any direct references in the protest-related video clips. These mentions could be in the form of images, text, or audio. For example, if a video clip is focused on the protests in Egypt, but provides a reference or example of political protests in Pakistan, it should be coded as "Yes."

In another content category, "Iconic Figure," refers to three personalities: Mohamed Bouazizi, the Tunisian street vendor, Khalid Said, the Egyptian man who died after police torture, and Iftikhar Chaudry, Pakistan's Chief Justice. The study argues that these three personalities served as a catalyst during the political uprisings, and so any references to these

personalities in the protest-related video clips should be coded as a separate category.

"Social Dysfunction," another content category, is defined as "violence of any sort, military, criminal, natural or personal, such as any sign of war, riots, looting, death, wounding, heartbreak, deprivation, human misery and suffering, disaster (hunger, flooding, earthquake), social unrest, protests, verbal arguments, or political disputes" (Perlmutter 1996, p. 450). These social dysfunctions are further divided into peaceful and violent protests. "Peaceful Protests": A protest with no one being hurt, but something or someone being protested. "Violent Protests": Large scale riots, looting, street fights involving civilians, but military and police can also be present.

The content category, "appeals," was adopted from a previous study on YouTube videos by Rutledge (2009). As Rutledge (2009) describes it:

> The content category 'Appeals' provided several options worthy of a short explanation. A 'Religious' appeal [in a protest-related video] would try to motivate or influence individuals based on arguments or statements related the Islamic (Muslim) religion. Nationalistic [appeal]…is a nationalistic ideology appealing to a tie to those who belong to the Arab [Muslim] world…The appeal is based on a common heritage or culture. Emotional/ affect appeals refer to stories or pleas with high emotional intensity or those 'tugging on heartstrings.' (p. 75-76)

It is worth mentioning here that the words religious appeals, ritual, ceremonial acts, or displays in this study refer to Islamic religious activities. For example, Egyptian Muslims praying at Tahrir Square amidst the protests. Religious appeals will refer to Islamic supplications. These may include any reference to Allah, the Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), the Quran, slogans like "Allah-o-Akber" and prayers.

Qualitative Content Analysis of YouTube Videos

In order to address the final two research questions (RQ 7 & 8), this study uses a qualitative content analysis approach (Pidgeon & Henwood 2004; Perlmutter 1999; Baxter, Riemer et al. 1985; Dale 1935). The visual, lexical, oral analysis of selected YouTube video clips helped identify common themes within and among the three countries in the context of the political crises in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. Furthermore, because of its exploratory nature, this qualitative content analysis provides the researcher an opportunity to look beyond the obvious to find unique themes and patterns that might exist in these videos. Before discussing the strategies and techniques used for this analysis, it is important to revisit the concept of qualitative methods and how it facilitates an in-depth view of the data.

What is Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research denotes inductive, generative, constructive and subjective processes (Pidgeon & Henwood 2004; Ryan & Bernard 2000; Lecompte, Preissle, & Tesch, 1993). Denzin & Lincoln (2005) argue that qualitative research involves an interpretive approach to data in the form of interviews, images, text, and field notes. They add:

> Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3)

According to Coffee & Atkinson (1996), qualitative researchers employ a variety of strategies and methods to collect and analyze a variety of empirical materials. It is important

for qualitative researchers to explore their data from a variety of perspectives, or at least be able to make informed decisions about the analytical strategy adopted for a particular project. This variety of approaches in qualitative data analysis can be a source of creativity and fun.

As discussed elsewhere, this study is an exploratory examination of YouTube videos and visual analysis is the most suitable approach for meeting the objectives of this dissertation, particularly when combined with the descriptive content analysis of the videos. In other words, the qualitative visual/lexical/oral analysis is helpful for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns and significant themes emerging within data (Braun & Clarke 2006). Furthermore, "[t]hematic analyses move beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focus on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, that is, 'themes'" (Guest, MacQueen, and Namey 2012, p. 10). Accordingly, to investigate the RQ 7 and RQ 8, the dissertation uses this methodology to examine YouTube video clips of political protests in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. The visual analysis is not only a proper tool for finding commonalities of themes among the video clips of political protests under study, but it also provides the means of describing and contextualizing multiple angles and observations regarding these videos (Rose 2011; Braun & Clarke 2006; Coffee & Atkinson, 1996). Simply put, this second level of analysis of the videos will provide contextualization to the identified and discussed themes from the descriptive analysis. In short, visual content analysis will provide a complete portrait of what is going on and why in these videos.

Coding Procedures to Identify Common Patterns

The coding procedures for acquired data refer to the analysis of qualitative content. This analysis provides specialized way of transforming data into results. In other words, it is the process by which the researcher expands and extends data beyond a descriptive account.

It is an inductive, data-led activity (Coffee & Atkinson, 1996). For this study, I created 60 coding sheets, 20 for each country, for the visual/lexical/oral analysis of each video (See Appendix G). Each coding sheet contained six categories of content: types of images, scenes, population, symbols, situations, and implicit and explicit message of each video.

After coding the data, I categorized major codes in terms of their properties and dimensions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Once the data were organized into categories and subcategories, I took note of the repeated emerging themes to come up with broader conceptual framework. For example, a majority of protest-related YouTube videos showed the protests were taking place in urban settings, mostly in front of the presidential palaces of the three countries. This helped me to come up with a general theme as the "Epicenter of Protests" under which I could organize all the relevant codes. I also used the technique of memoing during the initial data collection and analysis of the YouTube videos. It was a helpful technique to keep myself on track while I was moving in-depth to further understand and explore the narrative of the most-viewed videos (Charmaz 2002).

Once all the videos were analyzed and coded on these paper sheets, three more tables—One for each country—were created to summarize and identify predominant patterns in each case (See Appendices H, I, & J for Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt, respectively). These three tables allowed me to further analyze and summarize the data and create a final table with all the reoccurring and significant themes to be discussed in the findings section. For this investigation, I watched the YouTube videos multiple times to search for themes and to generate initial codes (Braun & Clarke 2006). After reviewing the emerging themes, I defined and named those patterns (themes) discussed in the findings section.

Definition of Terminologies Used in this Study

Most viewed Media. The term most-viewed refers to the most circulated and viewed videos on YouTube. Green & Jenkins (2012) introduced the term "spreadable media" as a substitute for "viral videos." According to them, the concept of "spreadable media" helps us understand "what happens when a large number of people make active decisions to pass along an image, song, or bit of video that has taken their fancy to various friends, family members, or large social networks?" (p. 111). For the purpose of this study, I decided to use the term "most-viewed" instead of "most spreadable" so as to achieve the clarity of concept.

Social Media. The term "social media" refers to the Internet-based human communication that involves audiences as the active producers and disseminators of content online (Burgess & Green, 2010; Green & Jenkins, 2012). Two scholars, Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (p. 61). Keeping in perspective these definitions of social media, this dissertation treats YouTube as a social media tool, which is very popular among the citizens of Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt.

Social Movements and Protest Politics. The term "Social Movements" refers to group actions in which individuals or organizations join a collective action to achieve a common goal (Olson 1965; Hirschman 1970; Jenkins 1983; Tilly 1994; Tarrow 1998). For example, Kefaya Movement in Egypt, Lawyers' Movement in Pakistan, Jasmine Revolution of Tunisia, Civil Rights Movement of the United States, etc. are some of the examples of group actions. For this dissertation, however, the term "social movements" should be interpreted as "contentious" (Tarrow 1998) political uprisings and mass protests in non-Western settings.

Protesters. For this dissertation "Protesters" refer to the people appearing in the "most viewed" videos of political protests in the three countries.

Online Political Activists. For this dissertation "Online Political Activists" should be interpreted as individuals or groups who are involved in creating and uploading of protest-related YouTube videos. Their identities are usually hidden or they use fake online profiles for anonymity purposes. This study assumes that such individuals and organizations are members of protest movements under investigation.

Comparative Methods. The term "Comparative" in comparative politics itself refers to a methodological choice while dealing with macro units of analysis. A simplified definition of comparative methods would be a study of cross-country, cross cultural or cross-society analysis.

Case Studies. A case study can be defined as the study of a rare historical occurrence, or one that is illustrative of some principle or hypothesis. Accordingly, an intensive study of a relatively bounded topic can be considered to be a case study as long as it can be linked to a larger phenomenon by using a keyword. Any case study analysis has two important components: spatial and temporal—thus any comparison using a case study approach is based on either a spatial unit (country) or over a specified time period, such as a day, month, or year.

Cultural and Ideological Frames. The term "Cultural & Ideological Frames" for this study refers to the common past that members of a community can associate with and refer to. The cultural & ideological frames refer to new but familiar symbols, slogans, and themes used by protesters/political activists that resonate with an individual's belief system in order to mobilize them for participating and sustaining a social movement.

Icons of Outrage. "Icons of Outrage" refer to images, still or moving, that become the center of public and political elite's attention because of their uniqueness and impact of people's perceptions. In other words, with regard to visual media, icons of outrage refer to still or moving images that elicit a strong response among the affected public. Thus, "Icons of Outrage" have the ability to differentiate ordinary images from the ones that have the tendency to generate public and elite discourse and or upheavals.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS & COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Overview

This dissertation is about exploring and understanding the content and use of YouTube in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt during recent political crises. For this study, an exploratory or descriptive visual content analysis of selected YouTube video clips was used to identify and analyze commonalities that existed between the three countries in the context of the political crises examined in this study (i.e., Pakistan, Tunisia, Egypt). In addition to that, a qualitative content analysis of the videos was used to interpret the predominant common patterns of content among the 6o videos. This chapter is organized in two parts: the first part discusses analysis in the context of first 6 research questions posed in this dissertation. The second part of the chapter provides a qualitative content analysis of YouTube videos to the last two research questions (RQ 7 & RQ 8), which offer an in-depth look at the most viewed videos.

Data Interpretation for Descriptive Content Analysis

For this study, the 60 most viewed protest-related YouTube videos were analyzed. Coded data were input into SPSS software for the baseline analysis of frequencies and percentages to examine significant variables in this comparative analysis (Neuendorf 2002; Krippendorff and Bock 2009). For simplicity, “all percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percentage with 0.5 and anything below this rounded down” (Rutledge 2009, p. 79).

Significant variables / content categories are discussed separately in relation to the research questions posed for this study.

Research Question # 1

What were the political opportunity structures that became apparent during the crises in the three countries under study?

Tarrow (1998) suggests that social movements form when common people who are unhappy with their rulers perceive the existence of an opportunity for political change, and social movements build when people succeed in communicating cultural and ideological frames, grievances, and successful instances of resistance in a way that engages and mobilizes masses of potential protestors. Data analyses for this dissertation revealed that multiple factors were present in the political opportunity structures that helped protesters in the three countries form sustained social movements. These factors include: use of English as the common language of communication, violent repression by authoritarian regimes, and emotional appeal to gain sympathy of the online community.

English as the Common International Language

The Internet has interconnected the world and English has become the international language of information and communication technology, science and business. Furthermore, since Pakistan and Egypt are former British colonies, the elite of these countries as well as the elite of Tunisia speak English. It is therefore not surprising that among the 60 most-viewed video clips in the study sample, English was the language most commonly heard in the sound tracks and seen in the protest signs displayed in the three countries. About 76% (44 videos) of the protest-related videos showed some sort of readable signage. In these 44 videos with readable signage, signs in English were present in 30 videos, while signs in

Arabic were present in 28 videos. Sometimes both languages appear simultaneously. It appears protesters in the three countries were sending messages to two publics: the international community and their fellow citizens. For purposes of consistency, only Islamic Arabic calligraphy and signs in English were analyzed for this study.

The high prevalence of English in the readable signage illustrates that protesters in all the three countries understood that English would more effectively grab international attention during the political crises. Having social media in their hands as an alternate to the traditional media, protesters were well aware of the fact that the Internet is a political opportunity for them to get international attention so as to put pressure on their rulers. Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt have a history of political protests and social movements against their regimes. Most of these protests died down without even getting international attention for two reasons: traditional media were under state control and did not provide coverage to any anti-government protests or rallies. The second reason is that people in the three countries lacked a common communication platform to communicate directly to the international community. However, during the political uprisings under study, the whole scenario was different. Protesters did not only have alternative medium of communication (the Internet and social media), they were also comfortable with communicating in English language, as a majority of these protesters were educated youth.

In other words, this finding also corresponds to the fact that English is the language of the international elite. During the visual analysis, it was observed that a majority of protesters shown in the videos represent younger generations. According to UNDP stats, more than 103 million Pakistanis (63% of total population) fall under the age of 25 years (UNDP 2013). Similarly, more than 50 % of the populations of Egypt and Tunisia are currently estimated to

be under-25 years of age (Ghannam 2011). The younger generations in the three countries grew up with information and communication technologies. They are adept at using YouTube, smartphones, Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, Pinterest and other technologies. These technologies were developed in the United States and have English as their "native" underlying language. Besides their national languages, protest-related videos from all the three countries carried slogans in English language such as: "Pakistan belongs to the Pakistanis" (Video 45); "Go Musharraf Go" (Video 55); "Ben Ali: The Game is Over" (Video 5); "Mubarak will Fall" (video 23). The use of English can also be seen as a language that might have attracted educated elites of each country to come out and join their fellow protesters who also speak and understand this language of elites.

Figure 1: Pakistani Students Holding Placards During a Protest Against President Musharraf (Video 45).

Figure 2: A Tunisian Protester Holding a Sign Against President Ben Ali (Video 5).

Figure 3: Egyptian Protesters with Slogans Against President Mubarak (Video 23).

Figure 4: Protest-Related Video Using Arabic & English Languages Simultaneously to Target National & International Audiences (Video 24).

Content of Protest Videos

In order to understand whether the most viewed videos were of violent protests, or they were representing the peaceful protests in the three countries, the study analyzed a content category, "Type of Protest." The data analysis found 77% of the protest-related YouTube videos showed some sort of violence, while only 23% videos featured peaceful political protests.

The dominance of violence in these videos supports Tarrow's (1998) assumption that people (unorganized protesters) commonly use "violence" as a resource to sustain their social movements. These protest-related videos used images of governmental violence to stir up people to anger. It is important to note that in these YouTube videos, Tarrow's (1998) idea of the use of violent tactics by the common people takes an entirely different form from what he

had predicted. For Tarrow (1998), since poor people lack money and other resources, they use violence or violent tactics as a resource to sustain their social movements. However, in the case of these protest-related YouTube videos, people "instrumentalized" the images of violence as they were recording violent acts by security forces to document repression, attempting to get the attention of viewers in the online world. Thus, in the case of these YouTube videos, the depiction of violence was aimed at generating sympathy among viewers toward the protesters with the hope that international condemnation will end their government's acts of violence and repression. (See Figures: 5, 6, and 7).

Figure 5: Pakistani Police Arresting a Protester During Anti-Musharraf Protests, 2007 (Video 45).

Figure 6: Tunisian Policemen Beating a Protester During the Jasmine Revolution, 2010 (Video 1).

Figure 7: Egyptian Police Torturing a Female Protester (Video 22).

These three images (Figures 5, 6 & 7) are screen shots of protest-related videos from Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt respectively. The element of violence is evident in the three cases. This supports the finding that overwhelming content of protest-related YouTube videos was filled with images (both still and moving) of violence, torture, and police brutality. It is important to provide some more contextual information to the Figure 7, which is a screen shot of a cellphone-recorded video of Egyptian protests. This video shows a military crackdown on a group of protesters in Tahrir Square. The most disturbing part of the video shows military officials beating two unarmed protesters to death. It showed military officials beating one of the female protesters as well. They ripped her clothes apart and do not stop beating her until she passes out (See Figure 7). The Figure 7 stands out because of the fact that security forces in Egypt are shown targeting a female protester. This image "went viral" and became an iconic example, which spread around the globe with a speed of light because it shocked the international community around the world about how women were being treated in Egypt during the political uprisings. Apart from the aspect of brutality, we need to interpret the iconic nature of this figure both in terms of religion and politics. In Islamic traditions, women occupy a special place of modesty, and men (who are not part of their families) cannot touch them. This Figure is a complete shock to this ideology and so was received as outrageous across the Muslim World.

Politically, the image tells a story how women are treated in Egypt, and that the struggle for women's rights in Egypt has a long way to go (Eltahawy 2011). According to different media reports, during the political uprisings in Egypt, military officers were accused of arresting women protesters, and "during that time male soldiers beat them, gave them

electric shocks and subjected them to strip searches. They were then forced to undergo 'virginity tests', and threatened with prostitution charges" (Amnesty International 2012).

Clearly, the violent repression of the security forces in Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt were used as opportunities to further the aims of the protesters. YouTube images of police violence were used to rally international public opinion against, and build condemnation of the three regimes. They were also used to rally the elite and young people against these authoritarian governments.

Emotional Appeal as a Political Opportunity

Political opportunity structure, in Tarrow's theorization of social movements, refers to the opportunities that social movement organizations and protesters may find advantageous to gain the support of fellow citizens. Tarrow argues that political opportunity structures are not static and may change with the changing circumstances.
Keeping Tarrow's definition of political opportunity structures in context, this study finds that social movements in the three countries utilized emotional images of protests as a new form of political opportunity to gain support of potential sympathizers. The following paragraphs provide some more evidence to this finding.

This dissertation was interested in looking at the kinds of appeals that the most viewed protest related videos had to offer to their viewers online. A frequency analysis of appeals shows that the content category, emotional appeal, is most common in protest-related videos (82%). For emotional appeals, the protest-related videos were full of still and moving images of blood, violence, and security forces' torturing and killing unarmed protesters (See Figures 8, 9, 10, 11,12, & 13).

Figure 8: A Pakistani Child Eating a Piece of Bread, Commonly Known as *Chapati* (Video 44).

Figure 9: A Protester Being Arrested by the Police During the 2007 Political Uprisings Against President Musharraf (Video 41).

Figure 10: Security Forces Arresting an Anti-Mubarak Protester During the Arab Spring of 2011 (Video 37).

Figure 11: Egyptian Security Forces Beating Unarmed Protesters at Tahrir Square, 2011(Video 38).

Figure 12: Tunisian Security Forces Shooting Tear Gas to Disperse Demonstrators (Video 01).

Figure 13: A Tunisian Young Woman Singing During a Demonstration (Video 12).

The emotional appeal for the Figure 8 and Figure 13 are worth mentioning here. Unlike Figures 9, 10, 11, & 12, the image of a child with a small piece of bread in his mouth does not show any element of violent interaction between security forces and protesters. The image, however, is aimed at depicting growing hunger in Pakistan. According to The World Bank statistics, more than 60 percent of the population of Pakistan is living under the poverty line. Poverty and hunger were among the factors that contributed to the political uprisings of 2007 in the country. The references to bread and poverty were also found common both in the cases of Tunisia and Egypt. In the videos, people were shown waving bread in their hands

to show that they don't even have bread to eat under their regimes while the rulers are living in luxurious palaces.

Another example of emotional appeal that did not show violent content but has a highest number of viewers is the figure 13 in which a young woman sang a nationalistic song. Also, according to the demographic-related statistics provided by YouTube, it is the only video that grabbed the attention of female viewers online. In this video, a young female protester is singing a national song memorializing the sacrifices of fellow citizens who had lost their lives during the political crisis. Many female protesters can also be seen in the background. This particular video had 16,612 views with 98 "likes" and only 1 "dislike." As stated previously, this video is an important one because it was the only one showing female protesters at the center of protests in Tunisia, and it remains the only video for which women were revealed as the top viewers.

In short, the most viewed videos of protests utilized the images of brutality and violent suppression by authoritarian regimes, nationalistic theme songs and slogans, and the visual representation of poverty to garner emotional of viewers so as to sustain their movements against the regimes.

Research Question # 2

What were the cultural and ideological frames deployed by protesters and activists in YouTube videos?

The research question RQ 2 is based on Tarrow's (1998) ideology of "Cultural & Ideological Frames" (Anderson 1991; Tarrow 1998; Hoskin 2011; Meyers, Neiger et al. 2011). According to Tarrow (1998), the idea of "cultural and ideological frames" refers to new but familiar symbols, slogans, themes used by protesters/political activists that resonate with an individual's belief system in order to mobilize them for participating and sustaining a social movement. The scholar argues that "social movements attempt to replace a dominant belief system that legitimizes the status quo with an alternative mobilizing belief system that supports collective action for change, movement leaders proffer the symbols of revolt to gain support and mark themselves off from opponents" (p. 106). Three content categories (i.e., frames) were found to be of primary significance in relation to this research question. These content categories are: the "Presence of Religious Slogans" during the protests, the "Presence of Strong Nationalistic Symbols" such as the country's flag, and the "Presence of Secular and/or Nationalistic Songs" in the protest-related videos. Each content category is discussed separately below.

Presence of Religious Slogans

While discussing political uprisings in the countries with Muslim majority, it is important to understand that religion, Islam, plays an important role in political resistance. Traditionally, in these Muslim majority countries, the term "Muslim Brotherhood" is often used to connect to their fellow citizens in order to gain their sympathy and support on certain issues. People use different religious symbols and slogans including Quranic calligraphy and

the images of Holy places (such as *Kaaba* in Mecca, Saudi Arabia), which connect them to the rest of the Muslim community on the basis of Islamic ideology and Islamic culture. The frequency analysis for the content category, "Religious Slogans", in protest-related videos shows that 60% of videos included some reference to Islam. Such references ranged from calling "Allah-o-Akbar," offering prayers during protests, and holding signs with Quranic verses inscribed on them to portrayals of Islamic symbols and places of worship such as *Kaaba* in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. During the coding of the protest-related videos, it was observed that even though religious symbols and references were frequently used, a majority of protesting youth wore Western-style clothing, and demonstrated an ability to speak and understand English.

Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt are part of the Muslim World. It is only natural that religion would be an ingredient in the anti-government protests. Holding Arabic and English placards and posters with religious slogans such as "Allah-o-Akbar" or other verses from the Holy Quran, mostly represented religious appeals. In certain videos, the English translation of the Arabic text was present. In some cases, protesters were shown holding their hands with their faces raised toward the sky, which in Muslim culture symbolizes calling on God for help. The analysis found that a majority of the religious-appeal videos used common religious symbols to connect to their fellow citizens. Religion was used as a weapon of inspiration and resistance. Another way to interpret this finding could be that protesters in the three countries used religion and religious values as a political opportunity not only to recruit potential sympathizers, but also to sustain their movements against their regimes. See Figures 14 and 15.

Figure 14: Protesters during Friday Prayer at Tahrir Square, Egypt.

Figure 15: Image of Pakistani Flag with Quranic Verse both in Arabic and English (Video 55).

Presence of Strong Nationalistic Symbols

Nationalistic symbols (such as countries' flags, national anthems, monuments, etc.) are another important tool that governments and people deploy to unite their fellow citizens. A frequency analysis of the most viewed videos shows that the content category, nationalistic appeal, is most common in these videos (63%). For nationalistic appeals, protest-related videos showed images of people kissing their national flags or holding signs and placards to show respect and love for their country (See Figures 16, 17, 18, 19, & 20).

Figure 16: A Protester Kissing Tunisian Flag During the Jasmine Revolution, 2010 (Video 16).

Figure 17: Pakistani Flag Displayed on a Kid's Face. The Flag also Appears as a Background for the Protesters Demanding Restoration of Chief Justice (Video 55).

Figure 18: Children also Participated During the Political Uprisings in Pakistan. The Image Shows a Young Protester Carrying Pakistani Flag (Video 44).

Figure 19: A Protester is Facing Security Forces While Holding Egyptian Flag to Express his Love for the Country (Video 23).

Figure 20: Egyptian Protesters including Children Carrying their National Flags During the 2011 Uprisings (Video 37).

Secular/Nationalistic versus Religious-Themed Songs

Music and chants were very important elements in the YouTube videos. The most viewed protest-related videos utilized these songs as another tool of cultural and ideological themes. Twenty-eight of the 60 videos (47%) featured (an overlay of) songs in English. Of these 28 videos, 21 feature secular or nationalistic songs, and seven videos feature songs of a religious nature. The findings suggest that an addition of secular or nationalistic songs to a video suggests an intent to appeal broadly to all members of the society, while religiously themed songs added to a video suggest an intention to appeal to the members of a specific religious faith or tradition. This finding may also be interpreted as the religious theme songs were used to connect to the fellow citizens on the basis of common religion, Islam.

The analysis of frequency and musical genre in the set of videos using songs revealed that secular songs were used much more frequently. Also, it may be noted that 53% of the videos had no song. Applying Tarrow's (1998) lens of cultural and ideological frames to this finding, it can be argued that the online activists (video creators and/or uploaders) in the three countries preferred using wider and nationalistic themes and secular songs to religious ones so as to make their protest message more universal.

In addition to the nationalistic songs, it was observed that some of the protest-related videos in the three countries used Western music as an overlay with the still and moving images of protesters. Also, this logic of cultural and ideological frames can be seen in the global context as well: analyzing these videos of protests, we can see an effort to make a connection to global culture rather than just narrowly focusing on the videos' specific

country. Looking at the examples of Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt, we find the social movements in these countries used slogans such as "People want to bring down the regime" and "Leave, leave, leave." They also used images of the Tunisian burning man (Bouazizi) and the Egyptian man (Khaled Said) who died of police torture in Egypt (Mendel 2011). Although Pakistan's political crisis occurred earlier than the Tunisian and Egyptian revolution, people in the country used very similar images of police brutality and anti-regime slogans to mobilize the potential challengers.

Data analyses of the videos selected for this dissertation revealed that Tarrow's (1998) logic of cultural and ideological frames takes on a somewhat new definition and direction when it comes to the videos of political protests on YouTube, the online world.

While coding for the content category, "Secular Music" (35%), it was observed that there were not only country- and culture-specific music but also Western/Hollywood songs in some of the most watched videos. For example, "We are Free Now" from the movie *Gladiator* was found in many videos from both Egypt and Tunisia (Watch Videos 24 and 04). Another famous song, *Imagine*, by John Lennon was also present as a background to some of the Tunisian protest-related videos (Watch Video 16). Even though Pakistan's political uprisings took place three years before the Arab Spring, Western songs were present in some of the Pakistan-specific protest videos as well (Watch Video 56).

This finding suggests that the video clips with Western secular songs as background were actually intended to appeal not only to their own citizens, but also to gain the attention of people in other countries, particularly the Western World. Also, in terms of cultural and ideological frames, the use of international music content on the digital platform should be interpreted as "connected" cultural and ideological frames because the message of these

videos is understood globally (Hoskin 2011). Clearly, the idea of cultural frames is becoming more complex when applied to social media platforms. Further discussion to this finding appears in the discussion section.

Research Question # 3

How were the "most-viewed" videos of political protests on YouTube part of the "informational cascade" during the political uprisings in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt?

Lohmann (1994) interprets political demonstrations as "informational cascade." The scholar believes, political demonstrations in authoritarian regimes serve as "informational cascade" for other people by making "public some of the previously hidden information about the nature of the regime" (p. 44). In other words, in societies where the mass media are government-controlled, political demonstrations serve as an alternative media by making private information about a regime, public. This research question, however, looked this informational role of YouTube videos during the political crises of the three countries. During the political uprisings, dictatorial regimes in the three countries banned mass media from covering any political protests. In response, information activists in the three countries used other kinds of media, particularly social media, to resist the authoritarian regimes. YouTube was one of the alternative sources of information that, taken together, made up an informational cascade. Other information sources included Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, blogs, and cell phones. The findings of this study suggest that the YouTube videos played a part in fulfilling this informational role in the absence of the traditional media.

As discussed in the introduction, the term "spreadable media" refers to the most circulated and viewed videos on YouTube. Thus in order to determine whether these most-spreadable videos played their role as part of the "cascades of information" during the political upheavals in the three countries, this study looks at the total number of views, comments, likes/dislikes, and the top locations for these videos. Data related to the number of views, comments, likes/dislikes provides an evidence for the social media's informational

role. This finding may help to not only understand the popularity aspect of these spreadable videos, but also to find out whether any of the protest-related videos were being watched beyond their respective countries. For example, it will be helpful to see whether the YouTube videos of the Tunisian protests during the Jasmine Revolution were being watched in Egypt.

Number of Times Viewed

As previously noted, this study focused on the most viewed protest-related videos from Pakistan, Tunisian, and Egypt on YouTube during specified periods. The term "most-viewed" is determined by the total number of views of each protest-related YouTube video clip. The 60 videos from Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt selected for this study (n=60) had a sum of over 23 million views. Looking at the total number of views in the context of thousands of anti-government protesters who came out on the streets to protest their regimes, it can safely be argued that YouTube videos of protests had an informational cascade role during these political uprisings. This finding, however, should not be misunderstood by undermining the informational cascade role of other social media including Facebook, Twitter, blogs, cellphones etc. Rather this finding corresponds to the fact that YouTube was only part of the media that participated in the uprisings. In their recent study on social media and political participation in Egypt during the Arab Spring, Tufekci & Wilson (2012) conclude that political participation and collective action during the Egyptian uprisings was a result of digitally mediated interpersonal communication. This digitally mediated interpersonal communication "is characterized by the increasingly interrelated use of satellite television, the Internet (particularly social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter), and the widespread use of Internet-enabled cellphones capable of transmitting photos and video" (p. 377). Thus this finding should be interpreted in the context of YouTube's place in

digitally mediated interpersonal communication. During the political uprisings, YouTube videos were disseminated and shared as hyperlinks via Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and even cellphone (Ricchiardi 2012). This was one of the factors, among others, that helped these videos achieve the status of "most viewed" on YouTube (Green & Jenkins 2011). Other aspects related to the informational cascade of protests will be discussed in the qualitative analysis of this study. Some of these findings will be discussed in the context of scenes and locations as most of the protests were taking place in urban settings where protesters had higher chances of getting heard by their fellow citizens.

Total Number of Comments

In order to understand the spreadable nature of a video and its ability to serve as an informational cascade, the study took note of some relevant statistics provided by YouTube under each video. In addition to the total number of views, the frequency analysis revealed that the total number of comments on all 60 videos was over 110,000. When compared, it is clear that there were far fewer comments than views. It can be inferred from this finding that even though many people watched the YouTube videos, there was relatively less political engagement among the viewers as measured by the number of posted comments. Also, some videos, with a higher number of views, got no comments at all.

Total Number of Likes and Dislikes

Multiple factors are used to determine the ability of YouTube videos of political protests as informational cascades. Statistics related to the number of likes and dislikes in response to each protest-related video helps us determine not only that people viewed these videos, also they were reacting to the message of these videos by approving or disapproving them. YouTube provides its consumers an opportunity not only to watch a video, but also

viewers can use “Like/Dislike” icon (which appears in the form of a thumbnail underneath each video on the right side) to express their quick response. There were a total of 4,647,580 (n=60) “likes” and 5,270 “dislikes” of the videos in this study.

The much higher number of “likes” suggests that mostly like-minded people consume this type of content on social-media platforms such as YouTube. In short, the chances for agreement on a certain issue within the online world seem to be much higher than for disagreement. In the light of this finding, it can be argued that people who watch YouTube videos of political protests are quite likely to be sympathetic to the protesters and their cause. Thus, the message and the content of these videos may have served the purpose of “informational cascade” for these sympathizers to join the protesters on other streets in other places.

Research Question # 4

Was *Al-Jazeera* a major player in the "informational cascade" that took place on YouTube during the political uprisings in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt?

Lohmann (1994) calls political demonstrations an "informational cascade." According to the Informational Cascade model, individual participants' decisions [to join a political protest] may depend on changes in aggregate turnout over time because people extract benefit-cost information from turnout members. This research question looked at the informational role of *Al-Jazeera* during the political crises of the three countries. The rationale for exploring this question is that the scholarship on the political uprisings in the Muslim World treats *Al-Jazeera* as the channel of revolutions that played the role of an activist by spreading narratives of political protests to its viewers (Harb 2011; Eko 2012; Lynch 2012). Before we look at the *Al-Jazeera*'s videos of protests posted on YouTube, let's have a contextual understanding of this pan-Arabic TV channel.

Based on the data provided by the *Al-Jazeera* website, the TV network's English channel continues to maintain its strong presence in the social media as it is the most watched "news channel on YouTube, receiving 2.5 million views per month. Launched on April 16, 2007, the *Al-Jazeera English* YouTube site has more than 25,000 videos currently live on the English channel" (Al-Jazeera 2013).

Many scholars believe that the Arab Spring revolution was not an overnight phenomenon (Ghannam 2011; Harb 2011; Eko 2012). Rather, we should look at the role of *Al-Jazeera* in the revolutions. Harb (2011) terms the Qatar-based satellite channel as the channel of revolutions and claims that *Al-Jazeera* had started creating an environment for

change long before the Arab Spring. Once Arab audiences were connected and ready for change, social media took over and the message of revolution spread across the region. The scholar adds it was because of social media that the message of the Tunisian revolution spread everywhere and was supported by non-Tunisians (Egypt) as well. The images of the Tunisian burning man spread everywhere because of social media, and served as a catalyst for the Arab Spring uprising (Mir 2011).

On January 25, 2011, when protesters gathered at Tahrir Square, the Mubarak regime blocked the Internet in Egypt to suppress the protests. However, *Al-Jazeera* quickly jumped in and started providing coverage of the protests in Egypt (Ghannam 2011; Eko 2012). When the Mubarak regime banned *Al-Jazeera*, the channel launched a version of the *Al-Jazeera Mubasher* website exclusively for Egypt. The website allowed protestors and citizens to upload their amateur videos of demonstrations on the website. *Al-Jazeera* used these amateur videos and unedited content for its own satellite news programming. Thus, social media and mass media collaborated to promote democratic change in the society (Ghannam 2011).

In other words, the channel encouraged average citizens to perform a journalistic role in crisis situations such as the political upheavals in the three countries under investigation. *Al-Jazeera* gained more trust from average citizens of the Arab World when it started airing unedited amateur content. This way, the network not only kept the rest of the world informed about what was happening in Egypt, but it also bridged the digital divide as people who were unable to use social media (such as senior citizens and less educated people) still had a chance to watch *Al-Jazeera* to keep themselves informed on what was happening in the Arab World.

In the light of this discussion, this dissertation argues that social media in general and YouTube in particular should be seen as a platform that both protesters and *Al-Jazeera* used to disseminate the narratives of political uprisings in the Muslim World. To understand the role *Al-Jazeera* played as an "informational cascade," this study looked at how many videos among the most viewed ones belonged to *Al-Jazeera.* The content category, "Source of Video*"* is analyzed below to find out how many videos belonged to amateurs and what number belonged to the traditional media sources.

Source of Video

Two variables were compared to determine whether the protest-related video clips were produced by traditional media sources (e.g., *Al-Jazeera, Reuters*) or by individuals recording what they experienced during the political crises. The frequency analysis shows that individuals or non-traditional media sources produced 67% of the protest-related video clips. However, the rest, 33% of the videos, were produced by traditional media sources. Thus, the findings are that individuals and non-traditional media sources were responsible for more content and dissemination among the most-spreadable protest-related videos identified for Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. Simply put, individuals and non-traditional sources, and not *Al Jazeera*, seem to have lead political activism on YouTube both in terms of content and dissemination.

To identify the traditional media sources that created and uploaded the protest-related video clips on YouTube, this study looked back at the archived data. It was found that only nine of the 60 videos analyzed in this study were uploaded by *Al-Jazeera*: four concerned the Egyptian revolution, three the Tunisian revolution, and two Pakistan's political crisis of 2007. The total number of views of these nine *Al-Jazeera* videos was 943,000. The *Al-*

Jazeera videos concerning Egypt received the highest number of views (835,337), Tunisia's were second (10,000), and Pakistan's were viewed 8,000 times. Based solely on number of views, it appears that, compared to other traditional Western media sources (e.g., *AP, CNN, BBC*), *Al-Jazeera* was a greater source of information for the wider public during the political crises of at least Egypt and Tunisia.

However, using another lens we can look at the informational cascade role of *Al-Jazeera* that had actually started much earlier than the so-called Arab Spring. As I had discussed somewhere else, *Al-Jazeera*'s main contribution was to unify the Arab audiences by amplifying their voices through its platform. It has been argued that *Al-Jazeera* actually paved the way for another medium, the Internet in the Muslim World. As it is evident from reviewing the literature on the Arab Spring, the revolution in Egypt that started on January 25, 2011 within just 10 days of the success of the Tunisian revolution is mostly celebrated as an exclusive achievement of social media without even acknowledging the role of *Al-Jazeera*. This dissertation, however, argues that social media in general and YouTube in particular should be seen as a platform that both protesters and *Al-Jazeera* used to disseminate the narratives of political uprisings in the Muslim World.

Before going into the details of discussing the content of social media in the Arab Spring of 2011, it is important to recall that social media activism in Egypt was going on from 2007 (Mendel 2011). Many online and offline protests took place in Egypt against the poor economic conditions, unemployment and emergency rule, but every time Mubarak's government was successful in suppressing these protests (Mendel 2011). Many bloggers in Egypt had been arrested and punished for writing against the government. Currently, there are five million Facebook users in Egypt out of its 80 million citizens (Ghannam 2011). But

this online presence did not turn into street activism until we witnessed a collaboration of social media and the satellite TV of *Al-Jazeera* during the 2011 revolution (Harb 2011). One example of such collaboration is that when Mubarak regime banned *Al-Jazeera* from covering the political protests against his regime, the pan-Arabic network launched its independent website *Al-Jazeera Mubasher.* The website is known for its unedited political programs and opinions. Al-Jazeera encouraged protesters who were gathered at Tahrir Square to upload their cellphones recorded videos on the website. The TV channel played those videos of protests unedited on its prime time transmissions besides up-linking them to the YouTube. By doing so, Al-Jazeera kept the informational cascade of protests at Tahrir Square (commonly referred to as Arab Spring 2011) flowing to its viewers all around the world both on the Internet and on its satellite transmissions.

Harb (2011) argues that by collaborating with the social media, *Al-Jazeera* promoted the concept of citizen journalism in the Muslim World. To look at the role of *Al-Jazeera* in promoting citizen journalism, we need to understand what citizen journalism is. Citizen journalism refers to the active engagement of the members of a public in gathering, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information (Glaser 2004). Such citizen journalism is also known as participatory journalism, street reporting, amateur videos and User-Generated-Content (Thorsen and Allan 2009). Keeping in view the above definition of citizen journalism, we can see the role *Al-Jazeera* played in promoting citizen journalism in the Arab World.

Summarizing the debate, the finding for the RQ 4 is much better contextualized by looking at *Al-Jazeera* and social media together in the context of the medium's role as an informational cascade. Also, the radically changing media landscape in the Muslim World

because of *Al-Jazeera* and the Internet is a ray of hope for political change and individual freedom, which continues to unfold even today.

Research Question # 5

How did YouTube videos of political protests serve as a "voice" during the political crises in the three countries under study?

In this research question, the term "voice" is coming from Hirschman's (1970) seminal work, *Exit, Voice and, Loyalty.* According to Hirschman, there are two possible responses to the decline of a state: exit, which means to leave the state, and voice, which means to complain, resist and/or protest to reverse the decline. Thus "voice" for this study corresponds to the role of YouTube as a platform to complaint and resistance, particularly when the traditional media are banned and prevented from performing their role. In Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt where citizens had opted to resist authoritarian regimes, many used YouTube as an alternative platform of communication to voice their opposition to their oppressive regimes.

In the light of this discussion, this research question is concerned with how YouTube served as an alternative channel of communication when the governments controlled all the media. Findings suggest that YouTube served as an outlet for dissent. During the visual content analysis, which will be discussed in more detail later, it was observed that social movements in the three countries used YouTube as an alternative platform not only to express themselves, but also to promote resistance against their regimes.

Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt all have a history of government-controlled mass media. The mass media in these three countries were subject to strict governmental control at the time of the uprisings. Dictatorial regimes in Pakistan (President Musharraf), Egypt (President Mubarak) and Tunisia (President Ben Ali) had absolute control over their countries' mass media both by coercion and by controversial legislations. Likewise, local and international media bureaus including *Al-Jazeera* were banned from covering the demonstrations during

the political crises in the three countries. Before social media, authoritarian regimes were using mass media to suppress the voices of opponents and protesters against their regimes. Even if people were resisting and protesting against their regimes, their voices could not get heard at bigger scale because the mass media were not allowed to amplify their grievances. However, the findings of this study suggest that social media including YouTube bridged this gap. To determine this aspect of YouTube in disseminating the narrative of political protests and social movements in the three countries, some of the key findings are discussed below.

Social Movements Used YouTube as "Voice"

Evidence for YouTube as an alternative channel of communication can be discussed in the context of how different unnamed protesters and social movements relied on YouTube to spread the narrative of protests. It was observed that during the recent political crises, social movements in the three countries used YouTube as an outlet for dissent. For Pakistan, two movements, the Lawyers' Movement of 2007 and the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy of 2007, relied heavily on YouTube as an alternative to the traditional media to promote their narratives of political change (Ricchiardi 2012). The social movement known as "Arab Spring" of Egypt used YouTube as an alternative platform of communication when President Mubarak had banned all other sources of traditional media including *Al-Jazeera*. It may be mentioned here that the online social movement, "We are all Khalid Said" was originally started on Facebook in 2010, but was later merged into the Arab Spring of 2011. The Tunisian social movement commonly referred to as "Jasmine Revolution" (A coalition of social movements made up of the Lawyers' Union, Labor Unions, and Student Movements) also used YouTube as an outlet for dissent against President Ben Ali's regime. It is pertinent to mention here that the factor of anonymity on YouTube may have contributed

to making this platform even more attractive for such movement because these political actors could raise their "voice" on YouTube while maintaining their anonymity. This is an important factor because authoritarian regimes in the three countries have a history of committing violence on people who raised their voices against dictatorship. Examples of Khaled Said, Ben Ali, and Iftikhar Chaudry can be seen as a proof in this regard. However, social media including YouTube provided an opportunity to the citizens of the three countries to speak up against their regimes while remaining anonymous to avoid harm.

YouTube as "Voice" for the Voiceless

The frequency analysis of videos shows that 67% of the protest-related video clips were produced by individuals or non-traditional media sources. For example, look at the screen shot message by "Anonymous" in figure 22, which says that the group (Anonymous) is using alternative media to spread the videos of Tunisian protests because journalists are not allowed to do so. It may be mentioned here that "Anonymous" recognizes itself as a global internet-based social movement, which was originally inspired by a famous movie *V for Vendetta* (See Figure 21). This "2005 British action thriller film directed by James McTeigue and written by the Wachowski brothers is based on the 1982 comic book of the same name by Alan Moore and David Lloyd" (Wikipedia 2013). The movie represents one person's struggle to avenge his government's wrongdoing and abuse of power.

Figure 21: A Protester Wearing V Mask During the Tunisian Uprisings (Video 20).

During the analysis, it was observed that some of the protest-related videos imitated the voice of "V" and referred to their struggle as the common people against their rulers. One such video on YouTube starts with a message from "anonymous" saying, "Although most of these videos do not have a source of information, in a way, this makes them more credible" (See Figure 22). The video ends with an appeal to viewers to join these protests to make the social movement a successful one. It should be noted that "anonymous" represents a loosely connected international network of activists and "hacktivists" that "operates on ideas rather than directives" (Kelly 2012, p. 1678). The network has a very strong presence on the Internet, particularly on YouTube since 2010.

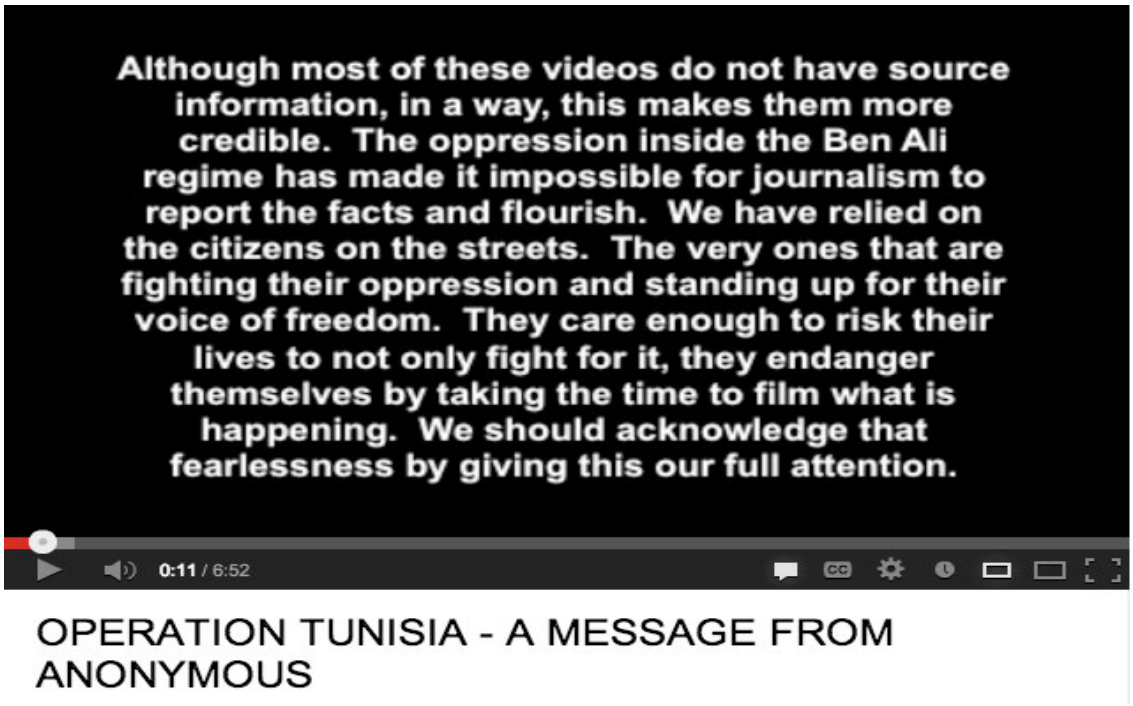

Figure 22: A Message that Appears at the Beginning of a Tunisian Protest Video (Video 20).

YouTube as "Voice" for Traditional Media

The analysis of videos suggest that YouTube's ability to serve as a "voice," an outlet for dissent, was not only true for common people who were protesting on the streets and needed a platform to express themselves. In fact, traditional media sources also used this social media as an opportunity to disseminate their narrative of political protests. *Al-Jazeera* among one of the biggest network TV channels reaching millions of viewers everyday used YouTube as an alternative platform when Tunisia and Egypt banned its services in both of the countries. *Al-Jazeera* established an exclusive website "Mubasher" and hosted its videos of political protests on YouTube.

The data analyzed for this study revealed that 33% of the most viewed videos on YouTube were produced by traditional media sources. For example, out of these 20 videos, 9 most viewed videos on YouTube actually belonged to *Al-Jazeera*. Also, the analysis shows that the uploading source of these videos on YouTube was *Al-Jazeera* itself. It may be mentioned here that *Al-Jazeera* continues to maintain its strong presence of the social media as the TV network is the most watched "news channel on YouTube, receiving 2.5 million views per month. Launched on April 16, 2007, the *Al-Jazeera English* YouTube site has more than 25,000 videos currently live on the English channel" (Al-Jazeera 2013).

YouTube's Outreach as An Alternative Channel

Since the research question is about how YouTube videos of political protests served as a "Voice," it is important for us to understand what made YouTube an efficient alternative channel of communication when governments in the three countries controlled all the media. People who decide to raise their voice against a particular regime not only need a platform to do so, but they need an efficient medium that has the ability to amplify their voices. Any channel of communication that lacks this ability to spread the message to a relatively wider audience would not be a good substitute for the traditional media. In order to understand YouTube's ability to amplify people's voice (narratives of political protests in this case), the study analyzed a content category, "Top Locations" for all of the 60 most viewed YouTube videos.

The content category "Top Locations" helps determine the geographical locations of the viewers of these videos. Were the viewers of these protest-related video clips of the political crises of Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt located in those countries, or were they elsewhere? The answer to this question may provide an understanding of YouTube's ability

to disseminate content beyond borders in order to inform, and possibly to mobilize or influence similar movements in other parts of the world.

According to the data provided by YouTube, it was observed that the most viewed YouTube videos were accessed and watched not only inside their countries of origin, but these videos had an outreach to many other countries of the world. For example, the United Kingdom, USA and Canada were among some of the countries that appeared during the analysis of the content category, top locations. This fining supports this study's argument regarding the amplification of voice. Political protests in the three countries were not a new phenomenon. Citizens of the three countries have a long history of protests against their regimes. But the regimes were successful in suppressing the voices and grievances of their citizens because of absolute control over the mass media. However, social media's inherent ability to disseminate the message at global scale changed this dynamic. When videos of protests appeared on YouTube along with other social media platforms, this message was heard and seen across the world. Thus, it can be interpreted that the outreach of YouTube as an alternative channel of communication provided social movements an opportunity to amplify their narratives of protests at bigger scale.

Furthermore, people in the three countries have their relatives residing in Western countries such as Canada, USA, and the UK. When these political protests started in the three countries, YouTube might have contributed to serve as a platform to keep them informed to what was happening in their home countries, particularly when traditional media were banned from covering these protests. Thus, these videos of political protests may have contributed to keep anyone, interested in these uprisings, informed, which might have contributed to sustain these social movements.

Research Question # 6

What were the metonymic YouTube images of each revolution?

The term "metonymic" means a "figure of speech consisting of the use of the name of one thing for that of another of which it is an attribute or with which it is associated" (Merriam-Webster 2014). For this research question, the term was adopted from the concept of "icons of outrage," advanced by Perlmutter (1998). According to Perlmutter, sometimes certain images become the center of public and elite attention because of their uniqueness. The term "icons of outrage," differentiates ordinary images from the ones that have the tendency to generate public and elite discourse and or upheavals. According to Perlmutter (1998), images that have the tendency to become icons of outrage must have the following elements: celebrity, prominence, frequency, profit, instantaneousness, transposability, fame of subjects, importance of events, metonymy, primordiality and/or cultural resonance, and striking composition. In his current research, *Metonymy* refers to an image's ability to represent a greater event because of its "summing up" quality. For example, the images of planes hitting the World Trade Center on September 11, 2011 can be considered as "metonymic."

The political uprisings in Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia produced icons of outrage that summed up the uprising in each country, and featured prominently in YouTube videos of the events. Because of their metonymic qualities, these might have contributed to the formation and sustainability of social movements in the three countries. One example of such images is the picture of the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi. The image travelled with the speed of light to the rest of the world, resulting in online and offline political activism inside and

outside of Tunisia. The answer to the sixth research question highlights three most popular icons of outrage from each country.

Most Popular YouTube Icons of Outrage

According to the findings of this dissertation, three images, one from each country, were found as metonymic because of their iconic significance. These include: the images of Pakistani Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudry, Egyptian man, Khaled Said, and the Tunisian street vender, Mohamed Bouazizi. Said, died from police brutality, and Bouazizi immolated himself to protest long-term police corruption. Pakistani Chief Justice was arrested and humiliated by the national security agencies while he was still holding the office. It is widely believed that the political uprisings in the Muslim World started from Tunisia when street vendor, Bouazizi, doused himself with gasoline and self immolated in a protest against poor economic conditions and police brutality. Bouazizi's protest suicide got national and global attention when someone posted the cellphone-recorded video of the "Tunisian burning man" on Facebook.

The Egyptian young man, Khalid Said, became a symbol of resistance long before the Bouazizi's incident. Police arrested the 28-year-old Egyptian man in June 2010 for allegedly exposing the corruption of security agencies. According to different reports, Khaled Said was arrested by two detectives and was later beaten to death in a police vehicle (Globalvoices.org 2010).

Images of Bouazizi and Khaled Said appeared multiple times in the protest-related videos from Egypt and Tunisia (See Figures 26, 27, and 28). Analysis for this content category revealed that 42% of the videos directly referenced the deaths of these two iconic figures. Also, any protesters killed by the security forces in Egypt and Tunisia during the

political uprisings were memorialized as followers of Said and Bouazizi by other protesters. For example, several videos of the Egyptian uprisings show protesters holding placards saying, “We all are Khaled Said.” This slogan comes from a Facebook page that was created by Wael Ghoneim as a mark of protest against police brutality. Police arrested Khaled Said in June 2010 for allegedly posting a video of Egyptian police officers engaging in an illegal drug deal on the Internet. Said was arrested by two detectives, and was later beaten to death in a police vehicle (Rakha 2010). Angered and frustrated at the police brutality, Wael Ghoneim, who comes from a relatively prosperous family in Egypt, started a Facebook page “Kullena Khaled Said” — “We Are All Khaled Said” (Vargas 2012, p. 1). Two minutes after Ghoneim started his Facebook page featuring the torture-disfigured face of Said, 300 people had joined it. Three months later, that number had grown to more than 250,000 (Vargas 2012).

Figure 23: Mohamed Bouazizi, the Tunisian Man Setting Himself on Fire (Video 6).

Figure 24: The Torture-disfigured Face of Egyptian Man, Khaled Said, Who Died of Police Torture (Video 24).

Just like the burning image of the Tunisian street vendor, this is an iconic image. It summarizes the brutality and violence of the Egyptian national security state. The metonymic quality of this image is also evident from the fact that many protesters carried only this image of Khaled Said during the 2011 Arab Spring of Egypt. They did not have any written slogan with it because anyone who lives in Egypt or is aware of the political situation of the country would immediately get the whole picture of why people turned against their ruler, and came out on streets to topple the decades old regime of President Mubarak.

The iconic images for Pakistan, however, focused on the Lawyers' Movement that began as an effort to reinstate the deposed Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudry. The military dictator, President Musharraf, overthrew the Chief Justice to gain control of the country's judicial system. As a reaction to the military ruler's decision, Pakistani protesters used the arrest of Chaudry, as an iconic example to sustain their protests against the military regime (See Figure 28). It is important to understand the political context of the image. Pakistan was under military rule, and President Musharraf had already suspended the constitution. Traditional media outlets were not allowed to cover anything that is critical of military or the President. When people saw this image of Chief Justice being arrested by police on social media, they interpreted it as an attack on judiciary of the country. This anger trigged the flash mobs on the streets of Islamabad, the federal capital of Pakistan. President Musharraf immediately blocked the traditional media from covering these protests. However, people with their smartphone cameras kept recording videos of these protests and uploaded them on YouTube. Several other sympathizers including civil society organizations and random and unorganized protesters later joined these protests, which eventually resulted in the overthrow of President Musharraf.

Figure 25: Pakistani Police Arresting the Chief Justice at his Residence, Islamabad, Pakistan (Video 44).

This finding about the three metonymic images not only provides us an opportunity to pinpoint the iconic images, it also offers an interpretation of why these images carry so much significance among others. Let's discuss the three images, one from each country, separately.

Torture-disfigure Face of Khalid Said

Two images of Khalid Said were found present among the 20 most viewed videos of protests related to Egyptian Arab Spring. One of these images showed Khalid Said as a charming young man with a smiling face. The second image of him was of his torture-disfigured face as a result of Egyptian police officials torturing him. In some of the videos, these two images were sometimes juxtaposed to each other to show the intensity of brutality

and torture of state agencies as they turned a bright smiling face into an example of horror. On the one hand, Egyptian police, under Mubarak regime, tortured and killed Khalid Said to spread a fear among others that if anyone else tries to mess up with state agencies of Egypt, he or she would face the same consequences as Khalid Said.

On the other hand, when people of Egypt came across this image on social media, they immediately felt connected to it. Among young Egyptians, the image was interpreted as "if this can happen to Khaled Said, it can happen to me." This association for a majority of people with Khaled Said resulted in the social movement "We are all Khaled Said." To Egyptians, the message was clear that if we don't protest against the regime and if we don't come out into streets, the state agencies that are operating under President Mubarak would do the same to each one of us. In other words, "it could be me." Thus, the metonymic quality of this image summarizes this feeling among Egyptians when they came out into streets during the 2011 Arab Spring to protest against Mubarak regime. People who produced and uploaded protest-related videos on YouTube were very well aware of the pain and Egyptian people's association to Khaled Said. That's why this image was used in the videos as a symbol of resistance and protest against the regime. The image also reminded the protesters why they were out there on streets and why they wanted to get rid of the regime.

Bouazizi's Image of Self Immolation

The Tunisian street vendor's image of self-immolation in which Bouazizi is shown engulfed in flames. The image shows Bouazizi with both of his hands raised upwards. Looking at this image, one can get the impression that this man seems very content who is feeling no pain of burns. In other words, the pain, misery and humiliation that Bouazizi had to face in the hands of his country's police was more painful than burning himself alive. The

whole narrative behind this image depicts that social injustices, poverty and suppression forced the Tunisian man to take his own life, which was a far better decision than living under these conditions. The condition of the majority of youth in Tunisia was no different than Bouazizi. Soaring food prices, joblessness and the culture of bribery left no hope for brighter future among the educated youth of Tunisia. In other words, Bouazizi's story behind this image tells the story of a majority of population in Tunisia. Perhaps that was the reason that the moment Tunisians came across this image of the burning man, they associated themselves with it. This image triggered the Jasmine revolution on the streets of Tunisia. YouTube videos of protests used this image as a symbol and a reminder for the online viewers that why Tunisians decided to revolt against the regime. Thus the image itself summarizes the political struggle of Tunisian people because of its iconic and metonymic abilities.

The Image of Pakistani Chief Justice's Arrest

This image sparked great anger among lawyers in the community and other civil society organizations in the country. People interpreted this image as a disgrace to the judicial system of Pakistan through the hands of military institution because President Musharraf secured his office by force and he was still serving as a chief of the army staff while holding the office of the country's president. People in the country saw president Musharraf as a man in military uniform who had absolutely no respect for the Supreme Court/judiciary and for the Constitution of Pakistan, which he had suspended soon after toppling Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif's government. Thus, the image of Chief Justice's arrest and humiliation served as a metonymic image, which reminded them of the fact that

they were living under dictatorship and the military as an institution had no respect for civil institutions.

It may be noted that among all these images from the three countries, the element of humiliation of citizens at the hands of security forces was found to be common. The disfigured face of an Egyptian man, immolation of Tunisian street vendor, and humiliation of Pakistan's Chief Justice at the hands of security forces are just some of examples, which contributed to the political uprisings in these countries.

Analysis: Part Two

Qualitative Content Analysis of Videos

For qualitative content analysis, transforming data into research results is called data analysis (LeCompte 1993). In other words, once coding is achieved, data has to be interpreted, and this interpretation stage involves three levels, which involve the need to retrieve coded data, exploring the codes and categories that were created, and transformation of the coded data into meaningful data (Coffee & Atkinson 1996). In qualitative research, the researcher assumes an authoritative voice. He assumes the role of an interpreter, suggesting parallels between the words and actions in a particular setting and the broader issues of communication and education across cultural boundaries anywhere (Wolcott 1994).

In this project, the second part of the analysis is based on the visual/lexical and oral analysis of the 60 most viewed YouTube videos. As stated elsewhere, in order to address the last two research questions (RQ 7 & 8) this study used a qualitative content analysis approach (Pidgeon & Henwood 2004; Perlmutter 1999; Baxter, Riemer et al. 1985; Dale 1935). This analysis of selected YouTube video clips revealed key themes within and among the three countries in the context of the political crises in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. Furthermore, because of its exploratory nature, the qualitative content analysis provides the researcher an opportunity to look beyond the obvious to find unique themes and patterns that might exist in these videos.

First, I will discuss the findings related to the RQ 7 seeking common patterns of content. These findings highlight the predominant themes and reoccurring patterns of content within the 20 most viewed videos of each country under investigation. This discussion will

then be followed by an analysis and interpretation of significant themes to respond to the RQ 8, which compares similarities and the significant patterns of content among the videos of the three countries.

Research Question # 7

Were there (a) any patterns of content among the top 20 videos for each country and (b) similar patterns across the countries?

To investigate this question, I analyzed videos related to Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt separately to identify common patterns and themes inside each specific country. I then compared the findings of the three individual examinations to note commonalities across them.

The visual analysis was binary: was something there or not? Categories of visual content included:

Setting or locales: Where did events in videos take place? Here I mean exact place (e.g., "Tahrir Square, Cairo, Egypt") and type of location (e.g., in capital city, main open area, near government central offices).

Types of events: What is going on in images, e.g., political protests/demonstrations? Further notation also distinguished intensity of events, e.g., a quiet march by protesters holding signs without violence vs. riot police tear-gassing and beating protesters.

Featured people: Who is in the image? I looked for identified individuals as well as types of people, e.g., "The Chief Justice of Pakistan" vs. "political demonstrators." In the latter case I also noted their demographics, e.g., "young people." In many nations in the Maghreb, Middle East and Near East social class is easily readable by appearance and dress, e.g., "young, urban, secular" vs. "older, rural, conservative."

Religious & nationalistic symbols: Are there easily identifiable visual symbols on the signs or protesters or in SFX overlays by the video editors? For example, the Shahada, the first line of the Koran ("There is no god but God, Muhammad is the messenger of God") in Arabic script is universally recognizable as a visual form in the Muslim world.

Themes in Pakistan-related Videos

The analysis of 20 most-viewed videos of Pakistan revealed some significant themes that were found present in the majority of the protest-related videos. Some of the significant themes included: violent imagery, protests taking place in the nation's capital, dominance of youth, people using Islamic symbols, heroism of protesters, images of the deposed chief justice's arrest as a symbol of dissent, and nationalistic themes such as the Pakistani flag and songs. These themes are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Patterns and Themes of Top Twenty Pakistan Videos

Category	Content	Description
Setting or locales	Two cities, Islamabad and Lahore, as epicenters of protests	18 videos show protests taking place in the federal capital, Islamabad, in front of the President's house.
Types of events	Images of violence	17 contained vivid proof of violent images. Pakistani police and other security agencies beating and torturing protesters. None of the protesters was shown carrying any weapons or other fighting instruments, but some throwing stones at police in retaliation.

	Heroic protesters	Several videos show that protesters are intentionally facing guns to resist and challenge the security forces.
Featured people	Pakistani Chief Justice as a symbol of resistance	Eighteen videos showed deposed Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudry being arrested and humiliated by police.
	Youth (urban elites)	All 20 videos showed mostly young males and females. Many wear clothing and have physical looks representative of educated, liberal elites who wear Western-style clothing.
Presence of religious & nationalistic symbols	Islam and national	Protesters used Islamic symbols, slogans and calligraphy (chants and slogans on placards) and Pakistani flags. Flag-kissing activity.

Since the RQ 7 was aimed at comparing the nature of content among the videos of each country separately, the emerging themes showed stark similarities among the 20 most viewed videos of Pakistan. For example, out of the 20 most viewed videos selected for this analysis, the content of 17 contained vivid proof of violent images. The content of these videos showed Pakistani police, and other security agencies beating and torturing protesters. None of the protesters was shown carrying any weapons or other fighting instruments. However, in some cases, these videos showed protesters throwing stones at police in retaliation. Put this way, the analysis shows that the overall framing of these videos is to amplify the element of violence that state agencies are committing on their own people to stop them from protesting against the dictator. The whole scenario of these videos generates

empathy for the protesters who are fighting for a just cause to free their country from the clutches of dictatorship.

The videos showed that utilized religion Islam and Pakistani flag as their cultural and ideological themes so as to create a sense of unity and nationalism among the protesters. The analysis of videos showed that protesters used Islamic symbols, Islamic slogans and Islamic calligraphy for both their chants and slogans on placards. Along with religious symbols and slogans, protesters were shown carrying Pakistani flags. In Pakistan, carrying or kissing the country's flag shows that people love their country and are united to protect it from the enemy. In this case, the enemy, however, was their own president and military chief, Musharraf. Pakistan is 98 % Muslim majority country. Thus utilizing religion as a political tool has the potential to attract majority of the population in the country. Similarly, Pakistani flags and other nationalistic symbols, when put together with religion, makes the message of dissent more convincing for their fellow citizens because it matches their ideology and culture.

Another important aspect that was observed during the analysis of videos is the fact that all of the protests shown in the most viewed videos took place in the nation's two most important cities, Islamabad and Lahore. Islamabad is the federal capital of Pakistan where President's house and the military headquarters are located. The city of Lahore is the most historic city of Pakistan. Throughout the era of Mughal emperors up until 1847, when British took over the sub-continent, Lahore remained the throne of every monarch. In other words, these two cities are known as the power hub of the country's politics even today. Out of 20, 18 videos show protests taking place in the federal capital, Islamabad, in front of the President's house. This street where the President house is located is named "Constitution

Avenue." The videos show that most of the protests and violent interactions between security forces and protesters took place on this avenue. This finding speaks of two aspects: first, people wanted to stage their protests at a place where they could get maximum attention of others. Second, protesting in front of the President's house can be seen as an informational cascade to express their unhappiness and grievances not only to fellow citizens, but also to the authorities ruling this country.

The qualitative analysis revealed that protesters relied not only on religious and nationalistic themes, but they also used iconic images of political personalities as a tool to spread their narratives of protests. One of such images was of the country's deposed chief justice that the protesters used to gain support and sympathy because he was humiliated by the security agencies. The second image was of President Musharraf who was shown as a war criminal and an enemy of Pakistan. During the analysis, it was observed that most of the videos (18 out of 20) made direct references to the deposed Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudry. All these references to the chief justice depicted him as a hero who stood against the powerful opponent so as to save the judiciary of the country. In short, the dominant narrative of all the videos analyzed was sympathy with the chief justice and the protesters, and support of their movement against the dictator. In other words, all the videos portrayed Musharraf and his forces as bad guys while portraying the protesters and the chief justice as heroes who resist tyranny.

The analysis reveals that most of the videos are based on raw footage of cellphone recordings. Among others, one reason could be the fact that President Musharraf had banned all media in the country so as to block the coverage of these protests against him. But people with their smartphones in hand did not stop documenting and sharing these protests. They

recorded and uploaded the violent images of protests on social media including YouTube so as to spread the narrative of protests to the online community.

Among other dominant themes take were found consistent in all the 20 videos include: youth as a majority demographic of protesters, the images of heroic acts such as men facing guns, and the use of English for chants and slogans against the regime. The overall narrative of all the 20 videos is to gain sympathy and support for protesters so as to sustain the social movement against President Musharraf's regime. It is pertinent to mention here that President Musharraf was also serving as a military chief simultaneously. People saw him as a representative of military institution, which has no respect for civilian institutions. Thus, this struggle also became a movement against the military mindset that inherently wants to rule the country's politics since the inception of Pakistan. An overwhelming majority of people in Pakistan is frustrated with the fact that Pakistani military continues to dominate the country's politics and foreign policy by undermining the interests of people. Thus, Pakistani social movement of 2007's was not only a struggle to get rid of President Musharraf, but also it was a resistance movement against the military's desire to continue to rule the country.

Themes in Tunisia-related Videos

The analysis of Tunisian videos also revealed the images of violence dominated the content of videos. Tunisian protesters also chose the nation's capital to protest against their President Ben Ali. The videos showed that youth dominated the protesters' demographics, and national and religious themes were used to mobilize the political uprisings against the regime. These themes are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Patterns and Themes of Top Twenty Tunisian Videos

Category	Content	Description
Setting or locales	Tunis, near presidential palace	18 videos set in Tunis near the presidential palace Two videos show protests in Sidi Bouzid (the city where Tunisian street vendor Bouazizi immolated himself).
Types of events	Violence	Images of violence and destruction dominated the content of all videos: Bouazizi's self-immolation, police beating and torturing protesters. Also, protesters carrying bread as their weapon during the protests.
	Heroic protesters	Several videos show that protesters are intentionally facing guns to resist and challenge the security forces.
Featured people	Bouazizi	The majority of the videos provided verbal and visual references to the self-immolation of Bouazizi.

	Youth (urban elites)	All 20 videos showed mostly young males and females. Many wear clothing and have physical looks representative of educated, liberal elites who wear Western-style clothing.
Presence of religious & nationalistic symbols	Islam and national	Protesters used Islamic symbols, slogans and calligraphy (chants and slogans on placards) and Tunisian flags. Flag-kissing activity.

The qualitative analysis of the 20 most viewed videos of the Jasmine Revolution reveals that images of violence and destruction dominated the content of Tunisian protest-related videos. The images that appeared repeatedly in these videos include: Bouazizi's self-immolation, police beating and torturing protesters, protesters carrying dead bodies, people dying because of police shooting, protesters are shown as bleeding of injuries. Also, protesters are shown carrying bread as their retaliatory weapon during the protests. The images of bread in the videos were used to express people's poverty, hunger and miseries while living under Ben Ali's regime.

It was interesting to observe that just like Pakistan, Tunisian protesters also preferred most-populous urban settings to stage their protests. The analysis reveals that most of the protests are taking place in Tunisia's capital, Tunis, near the presidential palace, where President Ben Ali was residing at the time of Tunisian revolution. Some videos show protests in Sidi Bouzid (the city where Bouazizi immolated himself) as well. This finding represents the fact that in the absence of Tunisian traditional media, people had only one choice to make their voices of grievances heard: to protest in the nation's capital so as to get the attention of

their fellow citizens. Staging these protests right in front of President Ben Ali's residence was also aimed at making the authorities aware of protesters' demands, and the unanimous demand in these videos was of regime change.

Looking at the overall demographic of protesters, it was observed that youth dominated the population in the 20 most viewed videos. In fact, all these videos showed a majority of protesters were young men and women. This finding also corresponds to the fact that like Pakistan and Egypt, youth constitute over 50 % of Tunisian population. Most of the Tunisian youth is educated and unemployed. They are fluent in English and grew up in the age of the Internet. In other words, at the time of Jasmine Revolution, Tunisian youth had the ability to express their grievances by utilizing social media tools such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

The analysis of the videos reveals that Tunisian protesters utilized Islam and nationalistic symbols as their cultural and ideological frames. In some of the videos, people are shown praying in the Islamic way of worshiping God with their foreheads to the ground. Most of the videos showed Islamic symbols, Islamic slogans and Islamic calligraphic themes. As for the nationalistic theme, protesters were shown carrying and kissing Tunisian flag to show their love of Tunisia.

While analyzing for the content of slogans and chants, it was observed that the videos were full of written and spoken slogans against Ben Ali's dictatorship. As with Pakistan, the dominant narrative of all the videos shows sympathy with the protesters, and supports their movement against the powerful elite. All these videos portrayed President Ben Ali and his forces as bad guys who are the enemies of the country. However, protesters are shown as heroes who have decided to resist the tyranny of regime.

The analysis found that most but not all of the videos are based on raw footage of cellphone recordings. People recording on the scene are also visible in these videos. This finding correspond to the fact that President Ben Ali controlled the traditional media of the country, and the protesters used social media as alternative to traditional media so as to spread their message of dissent to the online world.

Tunisian street vendor, Bouazizi's image of self-immolation was treated as an iconic image during the videos. In some of the videos, this image was juxtaposed with President Ben Ali's image in military uniform. The overall narrative of the videos was to show Ben Ali as a murderer of Bouazizi, and people's protests were depicted as a struggle to set their country free from the clutches of the murderer. In short, the dominant narrative of the videos was to amplify the grievances of Tunisian people who were dying of hunger and injustice being inflicted on them by Ben Ali's regime.

Themes in Egypt-related Videos

The qualitative analysis of protests-related videos of Egypt shows that as with Pakistan and Tunisia videos, violent images dominated the content of the 20 most viewed videos of Egyptian revolution. Among other reoccurring themes, the videos showed youth as a majority demographic, Cairo as the hub of protest-related activities, and the use of religious and emotional appeals to mobilize the protesters. These themes are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Patterns and Themes of Top Twenty Egyptian Videos

Category	Content	Description
Setting or locales	Cairo, mostly Tahrir Square	All 20 videos show protests in Cairo. Mostly Tahrir Square (AKA "Freedom Square").
Types of events	Violence	Images of violence and destruction dominated the content of all videos: police beating and torturing protesters, protesters carrying dead bodies of their fellow protesters.
	Heroic protesters	Several videos show that protesters are intentionally facing guns to resist and challenge security forces.
Featured people	Khaled Said	The torture-disfigured face of Khaled Said was shown in 13 videos.
	Youth (urban elites)	All 20 videos showed mostly young males and females.

		Many wear clothing and have physical looks representative of educated, liberal elites who wear Western-style clothing.
Presence of religious & nationalistic symbols	Islam and National	Protesters used Islamic symbols, slogans and calligraphy (chants and slogans on placards) and Egyptian flags. Flag-kissing activity.

The qualitative analysis of the videos reveals that all 20 videos show protests in Cairo, a majority of them at Tahrir Square. Videos show protests taking place near and in front of the President Mubarak residence. This place is historically known as "Freedom Square." Most of the violent interactions between security forces and protesters took place at this square. It may be noted that this finding is consistent with Pakistani and Tunisian protests. It shows that the motivation of people in Egypt was also to express themselves to a wider audience so as to amplify their grievances.

During the analysis it was observed that young men and women dominated the demographic of protesters. The analysis reveals that all, except one, who died of police brutality, were young men. This finding is also consistent with the fact that around 50 % of youth constitutes Egyptian population. An overwhelming majority of Egyptian youth is also educated and unemployed. Thus, the dominance of youth during the Egyptian Arab Spring was not to protest the death of Khaled Said, who died of police torture, but also people wanted the regime change for a better tomorrow.

The analysis shows that religion and nationalistic symbols dominated the content of these videos. Religious rituals and themes are evident in the videos as well. People are shown

offering their Friday prayers at the Square. Most of the videos showed Islamic symbols, Islamic slogans and Islamic calligraphy as well. Also, protesters were shown carrying and kissing Egyptian flags to express their love for the country, and to show that their protests are aimed at protecting the country from the Mubarak regime.

It was observed that the videos were full of slogans and chants against dictatorship. President Mubarak was portrayed as an enemy and a murderer, and protesters demanded he be thrown out of office to protect Egypt. A very consistent and dominant narrative of all the 20 videos was to sympathize with the protesters and support their movement against the regime. In other words, Mubarak and his forces were represented as bad guys, and the protesters were shown as heroes who resisted the tyranny of the regime.

Consistent with Pakistani and Tunisian videos, the analysis of the videos reveals that a majority of the most viewed videos are based on raw footage of smartphone recordings. People used their smartphones to record and upload these videos on YouTube and other social media. Some of the videos clearly show people are actually recording on their phones while protesting.

The overall theme of the 20 most viewed videos is to sympathize with the protesters and gain support of online community so as to sustain anti-Mubarak protests. In this context, the torture-disfigured face of Khalid Said was shown in several videos. This image was used as an iconic example to remind people about the cruelties of Mubarak regime on Egyptian people, and what this political struggle means to the people of Egypt. Also, as in Pakistan and Tunisia, the most viewed videos of Egypt showed several images of the heroism of protesters where men are facing military tanks to challenge the security forces.

Research Question# 8

Did these content themes coincide across the videos of the three countries under investigation?

This research question explores the possibility of common patterns and themes among the top 60 videos of the three countries. The answer to this question will help us understand whether the most viewed videos in the three countries share any common themes and patterns. Six significant themes are discussed below under separate headlines. It may be noted that these themes complement the table that was used for visual/lexical/oral analysis of these videos (See Appendix G).

Similarities of Themes Among Three Countries

These 60 most popular videos of political protests have several stark similarities: a majority of videos show violence against protesters. Military, police, and security officials are shown beating and torturing unarmed protesters in these videos. Notably, the security officials in the three countries used very similar tactics for attacking, dispersing, and torturing the protesters. These videos show protests taking place in the capital cities of the three countries. Furthermore, the majority of these most-popular and widely seen videos do not come from traditional media sources but rather use raw footage of video taken by individuals during the protests. This finding illustrates that traditional media sources were ineffective in their coverage during the political uprisings. The protesters in the three countries relied on alternative media such as YouTube to tell their stories. Unlike traditional media reports and documentaries, the average length of most of these videos is less than five minutes.

The following paragraphs will discuss six significant themes found across the three countries. Besides providing an in-depth analysis of the overall content of the videos, this discussion will provide further evidence and interpretation to the already discussed patterns and themes from the descriptive analysis of videos.

If It Bleeds, It Leads

The famous adage in everyday journalism, "if it bleeds, it leads," was very much true in the case of the most viewed YouTube videos of political uprisings in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. This adage basically means that people are fascinated with violence. It is generally believed that mass media including TV, radio, film and even video games with violent content have much higher ratings because people love to watch violence. The same principle seems to apply in the case of social media, particularly the YouTube videos analyzed for this study.

The analysis of the most viewed videos in the three countries reveals that images of violence, destruction, torture and chaos dominated the visual content. All these violence-related images showed police and security forces arresting, beating, and shooting protesters without mercy. In some cases, videos documented the scenes when protesters were dying from bullets being fired at them at point blank range. Egypt dominated such images where at multiple times people were shown dying from injuries and bullet shots that the country's police were firing at them. In other words, security officials who are supposed to protect their citizens are actually killing them in the streets.

Some of the videos showed close up angles of scenes when police and/or military officials are torturing, beating or arresting their own countrymen (see Figures 6, 7 and 26). Among other images of violence, the torture-disfigured face of Egyptian man Khalid Said,

the flame-engulfed image of the Tunisian street vendor, Bouazizi (See Figure 27), and the humiliation of Pakistan's deposed Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudry were depicted significantly in the videos (See Figures 24 and 25). Another interpretation could be described this way: such images of violence not only serve an informative role for viewers of these videos, they also signal sympathy for the protesters along with inciting anger against the rulers/dictators of the three countries. Generally, people empathize with others when they realize that what is happening to someone else in their own country may happen to them.

Figure 26: Police Torturing a Protester during the Political Crisis of 2007 in Pakistan (Video 44).

Figure 27: Mohamed Bouazizi, the Tunisian Man's Self-Immolation (Video 6).

Epicenters of Protests

In the modern world, capital cities of countries symbolize power and the rule of law. Because of the importance of capital cities, mass media seem to be more vibrant whenever something unusual happens near and around these power hubs. People in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt are well aware of this fact. The three countries have a history of flash protests erupting in the three capitals (Islamabad, Tunis, and Cairo) whenever people need the attention of the media and/or of their governments on a certain issue of importance. Thus, the whole idea and motivation of holding protests in nations capitals is to get attention so as to amplify the grievances or demands of protesters. An analysis and comparison of the three political uprisings reveals that capital cities provided the center stage for protests in the three countries.

During the visual analysis of videos from the three countries, a consistency was observed regarding the location and scenes where these protests were taking places. Although, the three cases under investigation represent three countries where political uprisings took place at different times, the pattern about the locations and scenes of these protests are strikingly similar. It was observed that the mass uprisings against the three dictatorial regimes took place in highly populated, educated, and relatively advanced urban places. I categorized this theme as the "epicenter of protests" to further observe and analyze why people had chosen urban areas for their protests, and also explore how this finding is consistent with the theory of informational cascade.

Pakistan. For Pakistan, all of the protests, except two, are shown occurring in the federal capital, Islamabad. For most of these protests, people gathered in front of the Parliament building and the President's House to stage their protests against President Musharraf. The motivation was not only to get attention, but also to challenge and change the regime. In Pakistan, the three most important buildings symbolizing power and authority in the country (Parliament House, President's House and the Supreme Court) are located in a row on one street. The official name to this street is *Shahrah-e-Dastoor*, which means "Constitution Avenue." This name was adopted after Pakistani parliament passed a unanimous constitution in 1973. According to the constitution, Pakistan is a democratic state and will be governed by the people of Pakistan who emerge through a democratic process. Thus, the name of this street links to a cultural memory for the citizens of the country, which remind them of their Constitutional freedoms. In other words, the title to this street "Constitution Avenue" itself challenges the dictatorship in the country. The President House of Pakistan, where General Musharraf was residing while he was still holding the office as a

military chief, also symbolizes the ideology of democracy in the country. This means that only a democratically elected president has the right to live in the President House.

When the mass political uprisings against President Musharraf started to erupt, people chose Constitution Avenue as center stage to express their anger and raise their "voice" against the regime. Another reason for choosing this location was the fact that the Supreme Court is located on the same Avenue. Since the struggle south to restore the deposed Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudry, and to free the highest symbol of democracy, the President's House, from the military dictator, it was natural that people joined anti-regime protests in the Federal Capital at the Constitution Avenue. In other words, the Constitution Avenue in Islamabad can be seen as Pakistan's Tahrir Square during its political uprisings of 2007.

Tunisia. For Tunisia, only three protests in the videos are shown occurring in the city of the Tunisian street vendor, Sidi Bouzid. Mohammad Bouazizi was born in this city, and he immolated himself in the same city to protest police brutality and injustice. Even though, the Tunisian revolution was born in this city, the place did not become the epicenter of protests. Instead, 17 of the most viewed videos of Tunisian uprisings show protests occurring mostly in front of the Presidential Palace, which is located in Tunis, the capital city of Tunisia. The videos of these protests show that people are carrying anti-Ben Ali slogans and are trying to reach the gates of the Presidential Palace.

One possible motivation for choosing this location to stage most of their protests could be the fact that people came out in the streets to challenge the regime. They blamed their president for Bouazizi's death. Since the Presidential Palace of Tunisia symbolized the power and authority of Ben Ali's regime, protesting in front of this house of power provides a powerful voice of dissent against the regime. Also, since the Tunisian mass media were

concentrated in its capital and were under the absolute control of Ben Ali to serve the regime, these media could not ignore anything that happens right in front of the Presidential Palace. In other words, protesters had higher chances of getting their "voices" heard from the nation's capital. In addition to that, Tunis is the largest city of the country with the highest population. Most of this population comes from the educated elite. Thus, it is easier to mobilize people with awareness and resources in the nation's capital than the other less populated and relatively less educated parts of the country. Also, because of its historical importance, Tunis is one of the most popular tourism places for foreigners (Dumper & Stanley 2008), which makes this city a prime location to hold such protests so as to amplify the voices of the voiceless.

Egypt. For Egypt, all of the protests, except one in which police are beating a woman, occurred at Tahrir Square in Cairo. Tahrir Square maintains a historical significance for Cairo since 13th Century. Tahrir, "which means *liberation* in Arabic is one of the oldest squares in modern Cairo" (Al-Sayyad 2011). According to Al-Jazeera (2011), the Square has been the traditional site for major protests and demonstrations over the years, including the 1977 bread riots. "Originally it was called Maidan Ismailia - after the 19th-century ruler Khedive Ismail who commissioned the new downtown district's design. It was renamed Maidan al-Tahrir or Liberation Square in 1954 after the 1952 Egyptian revolution - turning Egypt from a constitutional monarchy into a republic" (Al-Jazeera 2011). Thus, the so-called Arab Spring protests that erupted at Tahrir Square were not a new phenomenon. The Egyptian people have a cultural and historical association with the Square. For them, Tahrir Square symbolizes "liberation." During the Arab Spring revolution, protesters used Tahrir Square as the epicenter of the protests. As in Pakistan and Tunisia, protesters in Egypt also

wanted to amplify their grievances so that their voices of dissent could be heard right in the middle of the country's power hub, Cairo.

Just like any other dictator, President Mubarak immediately banned mass media from covering the protests against his regime. However, this time President Mubarak could not stop the protesters from sharing their negative information about the regime with their fellow citizens because they were using social media as an alternate platform of communication. In other words, having the opportunity to record and upload these protests on social media so as to amplify the voices of protesters can be seen as a political opportunity that might have contributed to the informational cascades of these protests for the people of Egypt.

In summary, such political protests were not uncommon in the three countries. Political activists and protesters have a long history of interrupted protests in the federal capitals of Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. One possible reason for choosing capital cities, and particularly sites in front of presidential palaces is that the protesters wanted to get noticed. Also, in all three countries, the mass media cluster in their federal capitals because the traditional media are supposed to serve and report on the activities of rulers, not the plight of people. Thus, if people manage to wage a protest in front of a parliament building or a presidential palace, they are sure to get media attention. This means their dissenting voices have a better chance of being heard at a bigger scale.

In the three countries that were investigated for this dissertation, the dictatorial regimes were very well aware of this fact. Thus, when these dictators could not control the political protests, they blocked the traditional media coverage of these protests so to suppress the voices of these protesters. However, as discussed earlier, for the very first time in the history of these countries, people had an alternative to traditional media in the form of social

media including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and blogs. Protesters used their cellphones to record the ongoing protests against their dictators and uploaded them on social media platforms. Thus, the informational cascade regarding people's unhappiness and disapproval of the regime kept flowing on the social media platforms even though the mass media were vanished from the scene.

Youth Prevails

The videos analyzed for the three countries showed protesters of all ages including men, women and children. However, an in-depth analysis of these videos reveals that an overwhelming majority of participants consisted of youth, both men and women (See Figure 28). This finding regarding the dominance of youth among protesters of the three countries can be interpreted in the context of digital media. In other words, the rise of digital modes of communication corresponds to the average age of younger generations. To understand this finding, lets look at some important facts about the rising population of youth in the three countries as a majority of them are growing up with technology in their hands.

The popularity of digital media in the Muslim World is not only the fact that the citizens in majority of these countries lacked access to traditional media sources, but also with the rising proportion of youth in countries with a Muslim majority who contribute to "netizens" or "net generation" (Papacharissi 2010; Papacharissi 2010; Arab Media Outlook 2013). The available data on Arab demographics shows that "more than 50 percent of the population of Yemen, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco, and Egypt are currently estimated to be under 25 years of age, while in the rest of the Arab region, the under-25, 'net generation' makes up between 35 to 47 percent of the total populations" (Ghannam 2011). According to UNDP stats, more than 103 million Pakistanis (63% of total population) fall

under the age of 25 years (UNDP 2013). As discussed earlier, a majority of youth in the Muslim World has access to the Internet and smart phones. In other words, even though mainstream media serve the interests of ruling elites, youth in Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt have another avenue for accessing digital media in the form of smartphones, social media, and blogs, where they can express their views and unhappiness toward their respective regimes.

Another aspect of having vibrant youth in the Muslim World is the younger generation's ability to engage politically to change or reform the existing political system in their countries. It is pertinent to mention here that the three countries under study (Pakistan, Egypt, Tunisia) are not oil-rich as most of the Middle East is. These three countries have a higher number of educated un-employed youth, and the Internet and mobile phone communication in these countries is more predominant. Political science scholar, Ross (2001) argues that oil and mineral wealth in countries such as Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain actually hinders democracy since these countries can use wealth to compensate the grievances of citizens. In contrast, since Pakistan, Egypt, and Tunisia, are not oil-rich, we can argue that their respective regimes could not appease the anger of their youth, which contributed to the political unrest in these countries. Huntington (1965) provides the concept of the snowballing impact of democratization. By snowballing, he means that sometimes a democratic wave in one country may encourage similar movements in neighboring states. To support his argument, Huntington says, "In 1990, for instance, it was reported that the 'upheaval in Eastern Europe' had 'fueled demands for change in the Arab world' and prompted leaders in Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, and Algeria to open up more political space for the expression of discontent" (p 16). Although Huntington proposed the idea of a

snowballing impact 22 years ago, his work seems to be relevant in the case of recent political uprisings Pakistan, Egypt and Tunisia, particularly since these three countries have political, cultural, religious, and economical commonalities besides having access to social media and their ability to communicate in English (Hafez 2007; Hafez 2008; Eko 2012). Thus, the commonality of themes and patterns of protests also correspond to the fact that these three countries share comparable population of protesters (youth) who used similar tactics to raise their voices of dissent during the political upheavals under study.

In addition to that, while analyzing the selected videos it was observed that women were equal participants in political protests on the streets in all three countries (See Figures 29 & 30). The importance of this finding also comes from the fact that in Muslim majority countries women are usually hesitant to play active roles in country's politics. For women, coming out on streets along with their fellow men to protest against their regimes indicates that the majority of protesters in the three countries belonged to elite families. Muslim women who belong to the educated, liberal and elite classes in these three countries enjoy relatively more freedom to take part in political activities. Keeping this cultural and social taboo of women's participation in protests in Muslim societies, it can be inferred that a majority of women who participated in these protests belonged to privileged class, and so they had the opportunity to come out and take part in protests to express their disapproval of a particular regime.

Figure 28: Tunisian Youth Wearing Western Style Clothing During the Jasmine Revolution (Video 20)

Figure 29: A Woman Protester at Tahrir Square, Egypt, Arab Spring 2011 (Video 27).

Figure 30: A Woman Protester During the Anti-Musharraf Protests in Islamabad (Video 41).

Symbols

A chant, slogans, symbols, religious and/or cultural references or visualizations serve as important elements of protests. Tarrow (1998) believes that culturally compatible symbols and slogans actually help protesters sustain their movements by encouraging sympathizers to join them. These symbols and slogans directly express grievances and demand something collectively. The three countries revealed an interesting pattern of symbols not only within the videos of a country, but also across the videos of the three countries. Among such slogans and symbols, Islamic religious calligraphic themes, use of flags to express the love for their countries, and anti-regime slogans showed stark similarities.

In particular, the visual analysis of the three countries showed a consistent pattern of certain symbols, chants, and slogans that appeared in majority of the videos. These symbols ranged from countries' flags and V-signs, to religious chants and Islamic calligraphic themes. The V-sign, however, appeared not only as a sign for "victory," as it is commonly perceived, but also to denote a specific unidentified social movement on the Internet. This online social movement is known as "Anonymous." The movement's slogan is "V" where V stands for "V for Vendetta," a famous British movie that is based on a graphic novel. A detailed analysis has been provided to this symbol in the descriptive analysis section.

Symbols of solidarity and brotherhood among Muslim community were also found evident in these videos. For example, the images of protesters who are offering Friday prayers at Tahrir Square (See Figure 14) symbolize Muslim unity regardless of their country's origin. The use of religious slogans might have served two objectives for the protesters: to connect to their fellow citizens, and to gain support and sympathy of Muslim community across the world.

Since most of the protesters in the three countries belonged to privileged classes, they do not serve as true representatives of their countries' larger populations where an overwhelming majority lives under poverty line. However, using Islamic chants and religious slogans might have helped these protesters to connect themselves to the rest of their Muslim brothers and sisters on the basis of shared religion and culture. In other words, using a religious theme actually helped the protesters to gain the support and sympathy of their fellow citizens.

Furthermore, this religious narrative not only represents Muslim brotherhood inside a country, but also becomes a powerful theme that unites their movement across the Muslim

World. The religion Islam becomes a protest tool. Regardless of the fact that Muslims across the world represent multiple cultures and speak several languages, they all can read and understand classic Arabic (the language of Quran) and connect with religious symbols such as prayers, images of sacred places, and Islamic calligraphy.

It is interesting to note that not even a single video showed security officials or policemen offering prayers or performing religious acts in these videos, even though the policemen and other security officials also belong to the same religion, Islam. In other words, the narrative in these videos depicts protesters as followers of Islam who are fighting the Holy war, which is known as Jihad, against non-believers. That's why whenever anyone would get killed by police or other security forces, he/she was commemorated as a martyr.

Similarly, national flags and nationalistic songs used in the videos were also aimed at achieving the same goal of getting more empathizers online. Since national flags represent the unity of a nation, protesters gained more attention and appreciation from their fellow citizens. It legitimized their struggle against the powerful opponent, in depicting these protesters as fighting for the freedom of their country against a very powerful and cruel enemy.

Good Guys Versus Bad Guys

Hollywood's obsession with the dichotomy of good versus evil works not only for the blockbuster movies, but also for the protest-related videos on YouTube. All the 60 most viewed videos of protests carried the same narrative: Good guys (Protesters) are fighting the bad guys (dictators in the three countries).

All the videos studied for this investigation portrayed protesters as "heroes" and the law enforcement agencies such as police, military and paramilitary forces as enemies, "bad

guys." The narratives highlighted protesters as brave men and women who are risking their lives by coming out on streets against the powerful rulers. These protesters are portrayed as being victimized and tortured by security agencies but refusing to bow in front of the evil. We see brave men who are courageously facing fast moving police vehicles, military style tanks, and guns (See Figures 31 & 32). As is evident from the videos, some such protesters lost their lives during these acts of bravery. They were celebrated as martyrs, which according to Islamic faith is the highest honor that one can get by sacrificing her/her life for a just cause.

Figure 31: A Protester Facing a Military Official During Political Protests of 2007 in Pakistan (Video 49).

Figure 32: A Protester Facing a Military Vehicle to stop it From Dispersing the Crowd at Tahrir Square, Egypt (Video 23).

In other words, the central theme or plotline of each video depicted two elements: state agencies including police are bad guys who, on behalf of the rulers, are involved in killing their own people to stop them from protesting against the dictatorship. The second element is to show the bravery and heroic acts of protesters who are out on streets facing the cruel enemy for the sake of their people and to secure freedom for their countries. The videos show that the protesters do not care for their own safety rather they care more about their country, and their fight is to set the country free from evil (dictators). Many videos repeat the images of protesters who are intentionally facing guns and military style tanks. The whole narrative portrays these protesters as fearless. They are brave, and they will not give up.

Likewise, Tunisian street vendor, Mohammed Bouazizi, Egyptian man, Khaled Said, and Pakistani Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudry, become the three icons of heroism. They are the representation of resistance those who faced the enemy with courage and stood up against the dictatorship for what they believed is right. Thus, all the protesters who were on streets were representatives of the same struggle, and if anyone lost their lives during the protests, they were commemorated as Khaled Said and Bouazizi, the martyrs.

On the other hand, the most viewed videos treated dictators in the three countries (President Musharraf for Pakistan, President Ben Ali for Tunisia, and President Mubarak for Egypt) as criminals. Several chants and slogans in the protest-related videos blamed Ben Ali for the Tunisian burning man's death. Also, President Mubarak was depicted as the murderer of Khaled Said. Likewise, President Musharraf was portrayed as a Nazi leader in some of the

videos, and sometimes he was depicted as a vampire who loves to suck the blood of his own people. In the videos, the images of the Chief Justice's humiliation and arrest, and Musharraf's images of pride in his military uniform were shown side by side. The plotline showed Musharraf as the criminal who attacked Pakistan's independent judiciary by sacking the Chief Justice, whereas, Iftikhar Chaudry became a hero who decided not to bow in front of the dictator even when facing arrest and humiliation at the hands of country's law enforcing agencies.

Message of Resistance

This visual/lexical/oral analysis of the most viewed videos shows the overall communication intention or persuasion goal of these videos to be gaining sympathy for those shown protesting against their dictatorial regimes. As was discussed in the descriptive analysis, the videos had the highest emotional appeal for their online viewers (potential challengers). Along with highlighting the images of state violence, the videos contained emotionally charged background songs and music. Take for example, the Gladiator movie song "We are Free Now" played in the background in videos for both Tunisia and Egypt. Such emotional music and songs were put together with the extremely disturbing images such as the torture-disfigured face of Khaled Said, burning images of Bouazizi, a woman who was beaten to death by policemen, images of protesters leading funerals of fellow protesters, and several other images showing injured and bleeding protesters. When put together, the combined narrative communicates the message of resistance. The videos amplified the "voice" of dissent by showing thousands of protesters pouring down the streets of the three capital cities including Islamabad, Tunis, and Cairo. Also, the videos targeted the

support and sympathy of people in the online world so as to sustain these protests and encourage more people to join the struggle.

The final communication intention of these videos connects us back to the whole idea of the informational cascades. Let's revisit the facts. In the three countries, dictators had banned mass media in order to hide the negative information about their regimes. The three dictators (President Musharraf, President Ben Ali, and President Mubarak) did not want others to see that people are unhappy with their policies and are protesting against them. However, even with the absolute ban on traditional media sources including the *Al-Jazeera* TV, dictators could not stop this message of resistance because people now had an alternative in the form of social media. When people could not get the attention of mass media, they used their own cellphones to record the ongoing protests and upload these raw videos on YouTube and other social media platforms (See Figure 33). Others (online viewers and potential challengers) got the information of resistance and protests against their regimes via these new sources of information. Thus, the informational cascade kept flowing even in the absence of mainstream media.

Figure 33: Protesters are Using Cell Phones to Record the Ongoing Protests in Tunisia (Video 9)

These findings highlight the cultural and ideological frames used in the most viewed videos of each revolution, the contribution of YouTube videos as "informational cascades," and *Al-Jazeera*'s use of YouTube as alternative platform to disseminate its content. The findings also documented how YouTube videos gave "voice" to the protests and leave us with the most iconic images of each revolution.

In short, the findings to all the eight research questions suggest that in the absence of traditional media sources, YouTube became an alternative platform of communication and dissent. The study finds that the social movements in the three countries (The Lawyers' Movement of 2007 in Pakistan, the so-called Jasmine Revolution of Tunisia (2010), and the

Arab Spring of Egypt 2011) exploited YouTube as an alternate channel of communication to disseminate information on political protests against the dictatorial regimes for purposes of promoting resistance.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

Overview of the Study

Before summarizing findings and discussing conclusions of this investigation, I want to describe my motivation to conduct this research. Before coming to the United States as a graduate student, I was working as a political correspondent for a news TV in Pakistan. In 2007, President General Musharraf imposed a state of emergency and banned the traditional media from covering protests against his regime. This was a devastating situation not only for journalists but also for human rights activists. As a journalist, I observed that despite the ban on the mass media, people were still recording anti-regime protests with their smartphones and portable cameras. Some of them were uploading these videos of protests on YouTube and were sharing them via other social media tools such as Facebook and blogs. In other words, for the very first time in Pakistan's history, we observed that anti-regime social movements kept growing in streets of the federal capital, and people utilized social media as alternative to traditional media sources to express their grievances and spread the narrative of protests to their fellow citizens. For the very first time the country's history, a military dictator (President Musharraf) had to resign because he could not withstand the growing resistance of people against his regime. Pakistan entered a new era of democracy where the Internet-based social media continue to gain popularity by generating political dialogue on certain issues of national importance (Arif 2011).

By the end of December 2010 when the success of the Tunisian Jasmine Revolution surprised the world, I observed that the Western scholarship predominantly focused on the

political uprisings in the Middle East without evening acknowledging the fact that such political uprisings have already taken place in Pakistan where social media were used as alternative sources of information to spread the voices of dissent. Thus, this study is an effort to put things in perspective, and is a first step to bridge this gap in the existing scholarship by comparing the political uprisings of Pakistan (2007) with the Jasmine Revolution of Tunisia (2010) and the Egyptian Arab Spring (2011).

The dissertation analyzed YouTube videos of political uprisings in Pakistan, Egypt and Tunisia. This investigation used a comparative-analysis approach. Pakistan was studied because it is the first majority Muslim country in which social media were part of the information cascade in the political uprisings that led to the overthrow of General Pervez Musharraf in 2007. Tunisia and Egypt were chosen because they are seen as the iconic nations of the 2011 Arab Spring.

Using the theoretical perspectives of contentious social movements and informational cascades, an analysis of the 60 most viewed (Green & Jenkins, 2012) YouTube videos of protests in these three countries was performed. Utilizing the mixed-methods approach, a quantitative content analysis and a qualitative thematic analysis of the most viewed protest-related YouTube videos uploaded during the political uprisings in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt were used to understand and explore the place of digital communication in protest politics. This study demonstrates how YouTube was used as an alternative platform of communication during these specific political uprisings.

It is pertinent to mention here that this dissertation is based solely on a study of the content of 60 “most viewed” protest-related YouTube videos. It does not make any claims about the impact or effects of YouTube on the revolutions. In other words, this study

primarily looks at YouTube as a "voice," an alternative outlet to the government-controlled media in countries like Pakistan, Egypt and Tunisia. The conclusions and the implications discussed in this chapter should be interpreted in the bigger context of digital communication and social media in general, and how these new avenues of communication can open more opportunities for research.

This chapter starts by explaining the purpose and importance of this research. It then summarizes the significant findings of this dissertation. Implications of the findings and suggested directions for future research are presented. The limitations of this investigation are also discussed.

The Significance of this Investigation

This study was conducted to analyze the emergence of YouTube as an alternate platform of communication in relatively less free societies such as Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt. YouTube is also known for offering a different perspective on the recent political uprisings: They are a part of a bigger phenomenon, not limited to the "Arab Spring." The following paragraphs summarize a few of the reasons for conducting this research and explain how this dissertation contributes to bridging existing gaps in the field of communication and media studies.

First, by comparing the political uprisings of Tunisia and Egypt with Pakistan's political crisis of 2007, this investigation offers a new perspective from which to examine recent political activism across the Muslim World. These revolts include Pakistan's political uprising of 2007, in which citizens used YouTube as an alternate channel of communication to disseminate information on political protests against the military regime for purposes of promoting resistance.

Second, Pakistan is a relatively less-researched area. While conducting this investigation, not a single study was discovered that presented the political uprisings in Pakistan in the context of ongoing social movements in the Muslim World. Academic archives hold virtually no information on the emergence of social media in Pakistan and the role it played in 2007, probably because communications researchers have yet to focus on how new modes of digital communication are contributing to political activism against dictatorships in the Muslim World and beyond. This dissertation identifies and begins to fill this void. This study clearly shows that Pakistan experienced online informational activism long before the "Arab Spring" of 2010/11.

Third, existing literature on the political crises in the Muslim World is obsessed with the term "Arab Spring" and so interprets every political development in Muslim- majority countries in the context of the Middle East, seeming to believe everything started there. The results of this investigation support the assertion that use of the term "Arab Spring" itself limits the ability to perceive the existence of widespread online and offline social and political uprisings across the Muslim World, far beyond the geographical boundaries of the Middle East.

Fourth, this study is unique in its scope. It is the first to look at the "most viewed" YouTube videos of political protests in the context of the political uprisings in these three countries. By examining the content of these "most viewed" videos, the study provides a new window for discussion of, for example, how iconic images from these three political uprisings were used to promote and sustain online digital activism.

In summary, the social media present a real challenge to business as usual in closed, authoritarian societies where the traditional media historically have only served the interests

of the ruling elites. This study helps explain how increasingly popular social media (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter) are contributing to the expansion of civil liberties by challenging the authoritarian regimes of the Muslim World.

Conclusions Related to the Study's Research Questions

Eight research questions guided this investigation. These questions were derived from the work of Hirschman (1970), Lohmann (1994), Tarrow (1998), and Perlmutter's (1998). Issues that were investigated in these questions include: identifying the cultural and ideological frames used in the most viewed videos of each revolution, YouTube videos as "informational cascades," *Al-Jazeera*'s role as "informational cascade," YouTube videos as a "Voice," the most iconic images of each revolution, and predominant patterns of content across the videos of these three countries.

The findings to these questions help us understand YouTube's ability to serve as an alternative platform for dissent in the three countries. In other words, the findings of this investigation contribute to this study's assumption that in the absence of traditional media sources, YouTube served as an alternative platform of communication. The following paragraphs provide summary of significant findings to each research question in the context of their theoretical underpinnings.

The first research question was concerned with the *"political opportunity structures"* that became apparent during the crises in the three countries under study. It was derived from Tarrow's (1998) perspective on social movements. According to Tarrow, political opportunities create incentives for people to participate in protests. Then, using cultural and ideological frames, protesters create new opportunities and form movement organizations and networks to mobilize participants. The study found that the social movements in the

three countries (The Lawyers' Movement of 2007 in Pakistan, the so-called Jasmine Revolution of Tunisia (2010), the Arab Spring of Egypt 2011) and others utilized YouTube as a significant political opportunity to engage in information activism. In other words, these social movements used YouTube as an alternate channel of communication to disseminate information on political protests against the military regimes for purposes of promoting resistance. Because of the Internet, political activists now had a platform of communication where they could upload and disseminate protest-related videos freely. This political opportunity of being able to express their resentment against the regimes helped these social movements to spread the narratives of political protests even in the absence of traditional media sources. This study shows that the most viewed YouTube videos of political protests in the three countries used emotional (82%) and national (63%) appeals, violence (77%), and communications in English (49%) to advance online political activism via YouTube.

The second research question was concerned with the cultural and ideological frames deployed by protesters and activists in YouTube video. It focused on the nature and content of these videos. Tarrow (1998) argues that since contentious social movements are aimed at challenging the status quo, they need new slogans and themes to mobilize a sufficient number of challengers of the status quo. These slogans, which he terms cultural and ideological frames, should reflect people's ideologies, values, and beliefs so that they can identify with these frames. He adds that mass media can spread these cultural and ideological frames and help magnify the grievances of people in order to get potential sympathizers against the status quo.

Since the government-controlled mass media in the three countries were not allowed to cover these political protests, the study finds that the most viewed YouTube videos

contributed to fill this void. The visual content analysis of these videos revealed that the YouTube videos of political protests utilized common religious and national ideologies as a part of cultural and ideological frames. For example, this study found that nationalistic appeals (63%) and religious language (60%) were used most frequently among the cultural and ideological frames of the most viewed videos. Many videos showed people holding and kissing their national flags during the demonstrations. Also, Islamic religious narratives that are widely understood across Muslim-majority countries were used frequently in the most viewed videos. Besides using religious and nationalistic appeals, the political uprisings in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt, used slogans such as "People want to bring down the regime" and "Leave, leave, leave." Protesters in Tunisia and Egypt also used the images of the burning man Mohamed Bouazizi and the torture-disfigured face of Khaled Said in this context.

The third research question, was concerned with how the "most viewed" videos of political protests on YouTube were part of the "cascade of Information" that developed during the political uprisings in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. It is based on Lohmann's (1994) model of informational cascade. The scholar interprets political demonstrations as informational cascade. Since the mass media are not free in authoritarian regimes, people do not get the accurate information about the nature of the regime. However, Lohmann believes, political demonstrations in this kind of situation serve as "informational cascade" for other people by making public "some of the previously hidden information about the nature of the regime" (p. 44). In other words, when a group of political activists come out on streets against its rulers, it threatens the status quo as the observers of these political protests get the information about people's unhappiness with a particular regime.

The findings of this study support the idea that the most viewed videos contributed to serve as informational cascades for the observers (YouTube viewers) of these protest-related videos. The 60 most viewed protest-related videos on YouTube analyzed for this dissertation received a total of 23,262,342 views, 110,270 comments, 4,647,579 "likes", and 5,272 "dislikes." These numbers speak to the popularity and outreach of YouTube during the political uprisings in these three countries. Clearly, YouTube was an important platform for the informational cascade related to the political uprisings in these three countries.

This finding highlights the ability of YouTube videos of political protests to serve as "informational cascade" in the absence of traditional media sources. It helps us to explore and understand the changing communication patterns in this digital age. However, the finding and discussion on YouTube's ability to be part of a cascade of information does not tell us anything about the impact or effects of this informational cascade.

The fourth research question, was concerned with *Al-Jazeera* as part of the "informational cascade" during the political uprisings of Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. Since it is claimed that *Al-Jazeera* was the channel of revolutions during recent political uprisings in the Muslim World, it was important to see whether *Al-Jazeera* used YouTube to upload and disseminate protest-related videos, and how much traffic *Al-Jazeera* videos were getting on YouTube. As for the *Al-Jazeera* channel, it was found that 23 (38%) of the most-spreadable videos were from the traditional media sources, and only nine (15% of the 60, 39% of the 23) belonged to *Al-Jazeera*. These nine videos received 942,836 views online, making *Al-Jazeera* a relatively small source of protest-related videos on YouTube.

The fifth research question, "how did YouTube videos of political protests serve as a "voice" during the political crises in the three countries under study? was derived from

Hirschman's (1970) theory. According to Hirschman, individuals' choices to leave or complain depend upon the level of choice and freedom they have. Using the analogy of a firm's decline, he adds that people may chose two possible options in response to the decline of an organizations: Exit, which means to leave the organization, and Voice, which means to resist or complain to reverse the decline. For this dissertation, the element of "Voice" was interpreted as "digital communication." The research question explored whether YouTube's spreadable videos of political protests gave "Voice" to social movements in the three countries. The findings of this study suggest that during the political crises of Pakistan, Tunisia and Egypt, YouTube served as a voice for political uprisings in multiple ways:

Pakistan. The findings of this study suggest that Pakistani citizens used YouTube as a voice for the independence of judiciary in Pakistan. The social movement in Pakistan was commonly referred to as the Lawyers' Movement of 2007. They also used YouTube as a voice to promote resistance against President Musharraf's regime, and for the restoration of democracy in the country.

Social movements and political protests were not a new phenomenon for Pakistan. Since its birth in 1947, Pakistan witnessed several political movements against all the three dictatorial regimes in the country. However, "voice" of these social movements could not be amplified because the traditional media were not allowed to cover anything controversial or against the regime. The political uprisings of 2007 were no different than that of the past, except this time people had a choice to express their resentment against the regime on social media. All the 20 most viewed videos of Pakistani political protests studied for this dissertation appeared on YouTube in the absence of traditional media in 2007. By late 2007, President Musharraf had blocked the entire mass media including cellphones so as to

suppress the political uprisings against him. However, it did not stop protesters from spreading the narrative of political protests because they had an alternative platform (YouTube) to upload and disseminate videos of dissent.

Tunisia & Egypt. In Egypt and Tunisia, the political circumstances and issues related to media freedom were no different from those in Pakistan. Also, it was not the first time that both of these countries witnessed political uprisings against their authoritarian regimes. The findings of this study suggest that just like in Pakistan, social movements in Tunisia and Egypt used this platform to amplify their voice against corruption, unemployment, and authoritarianism in the two countries. Despite the absolute control of traditional media, President Mubarak and President Ben Ali could not suppress the "voice" of political activists, because for the very first time in the history of these two countries, political activists had a choice to express their grievances through blogs, and social media. The most viewed videos of the Jasmine Revolution (2010) and the Egyptian Arab Spring of 2011 also appeared on YouTube when the traditional media including *Al-Jazeera* and *France 24* were banned from covering anti-regime protests in the two countries.

The sixth research question, was concerned with the metonymic YouTube images of each revolution. It was adopted from Perlmutter's (1998) work. According to the scholar, sometimes certain images become the center of public and elite attention because of their uniqueness. To define such images, he introduced the term "icons of outrage," that differentiates ordinary images from the ones that have the tendency to generate public and elite discourse and or upheavals. *Metonymy* refers to an image's ability to represent a greater event because of its "summing up" quality.

Three images (one from each country) were treated as the icons of outrage in the 60 most viewed protest-related videos. These icons of outrage include the images of Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation (Tunisia), the torture-disfigured face of Khaled Said (Egypt), and the arrest of Pakistani Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudry. These three images appeared frequently in the most viewed videos of political protests. For Egypt, the torture and killing of Khaled Said by police took place long before the Arab Spring. Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation in Tunisia during the Jasmine Revolution in 2010 reminded the Egyptians of their own grief. For example, some of the videos of the Egyptian protests made direct reference to Mohamed Bouazizi, linking his death to that of their own Khaled Said. It was because of the metonymic ability of these three images that they appeared in almost all the protest-related videos. Also, it was noted that several slogans that protesters were carrying in the form of placards were in direct reference to these images. For example, one very famous slogan of protest for Egypt was "We are all Khaled Said." The summing up or metonymic quality of this slogan carries a clear message that protesters believed that if this kind of torturous treatment can happen to Khaled Said, it could happen to anyone. Thus no one is safe from the cruel clutches of the regime.

The final two research questions, RQ 7 & RQ 8 were asked to investigate key themes within and among the 60 most viewed videos in the context of the political crises in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt. A qualitative content analysis was used to determine the predominant patterns of content of these videos. Findings to these research questions suggest stark similarities of themes and patterns of content across the videos of these three countries. These common themes range from—the presence of violent imagery, capital cities as the epicenters of protests, dominance of youth, the use of nationalistic and religious symbols as

tools of unity among protesters, the common narrative of good versus evil—to the combined message of resistance across the videos.

The discussion on the findings of these eight research questions highlights an important point: during the political uprisings in the three countries, the visual content analysis of videos suggests that YouTube contributed not only as a "voice," but it also has a place in amplification of that "voice." In conclusion, the findings of this dissertation opens new doors and opportunities for research to understand the role of social media as alternative channels of communication in closed, authoritarian societies where the traditional media serve only the interests of the ruling elites. In addition, the study helps to explain how the increasingly popular social media, e.g. YouTube, are contributing to civil liberties by challenging the authoritarian regimes of the Muslim World. Also, the comparative nature of this study was an effort to spot light on less-researched countries like Pakistan that are witnessing new opportunities and challenges simultaneously because of the introduction of the Internet and social media to its citizens.

This study contributes to expand our understanding of the "Arab Spring" to recognize the connection between this phenomenon and other struggles occurring throughout the Muslim World. Existing literature on the political crises in the Muslim World is obsessed with the term "Arab Spring" and so interprets every political development in Muslim majority countries in the context of the Middle East, seeming to believe everything started there. The results of this investigation support my assertion that use of the term "Arab Spring" itself limits our ability to perceive the existence of widespread social and political uprisings across the Muslim World, far beyond the geographical boundaries of the Middle East. This dissertation argues that the term, "Arab Spring," is deceptive and unnecessarily

limiting because political insurrections in the Muslim are not only taking place in the Arabic-speaking Middle East. In fact, the ongoing political struggle in Muslim-majority countries is a much bigger phenomenon than the "Arab Spring."

In other words, the political uprisings in the Muslim World neither started nor ended with the so-called Arab Spring. YouTube and other social media are helping political activism take place on a global scale. Challenging the existing academic views regarding the so-called Arab Spring uprisings, this study argues that political uprisings in the Muslim World had started long before the Tunisian Jasmine Revolution of 2010. The theory that the political activism and protests in Egypt and 18 other countries in the Middle East originated in the success of the Tunisian Revolution (Harb 2011) is simply wrong. This study demonstrates that the recent political uprisings in Muslim majority countries started with Pakistan's political crisis in November 2007. Egypt was next, with political protests against the Mubarak regime in 2008 and June 2010. Political protests began in Tunisia in 2011, after the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi. Thus, the Jasmine Revolution of Tunisia should be looked as the catalyst for later political uprisings in Muslim majority countries, not the origin of these social movements.

The findings of this study document this fact, and encourage future researchers to expand their research horizons to incorporate countries like Pakistan while studying social media and social change. The following paragraphs provide some more discussion on the much-needed areas of research besides acknowledging the limitations of this study.

Limitations & Future Research

This study is based on the visual content analysis of the 60 most viewed videos, which is a relatively smaller data set when compared to the tens (or hundreds) of millions of videos that can be found on YouTube. However, these 60 videos received over 23 million views from the online community, so their reach and effect should not be underestimated.

The researcher has a limited knowledge of the Arabic language and complete lack of French language skills. However, this limitation did not affect the investigation because this dissertation analyzed the visual content of the YouTube videos.

Since this study was based on only the visual content analysis of most viewed videos of political protests in the three countries. Researchers interested in studying social movements should characterize and analyze the online comments posted in response to the original material. Interviews of people who were involved watching and commenting on these videos would be incredibly helpful in determining the impact of these videos on the online viewers. Furthermore, some of the most viewed videos in this study received thousands of online comments. It would be interesting to see, for example, whether a political dialogue is taking place online (e.g., toward building a collective we), or if the comments are only isolated statements of individual political opinion.

Finally, it would be useful if studies looked at the relationship between social media platforms and the use of smartphones. During this research, it was observed that people used cellphones to record the protest events in the street. Examining the kinds of connections that exist between social forms of media and smartphone use would help verify the extent to which smartphones are amplifying “voice” in the absence of the traditional media.

Future researchers studying social movements in cross-cultural settings may find this study helpful in testing the applicability of existing approaches to communications and social movements to non-Western settings. Even though these findings are based on a relatively smaller sample size, this study provides a new entry point for future researchers to better understand the role of social media in forming, nurturing, and sustaining contentious social movements.

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APPENDIX A. CODING INSTRUCTIONS

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

This investigation explores the use of YouTube in Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt during the recent political crises in these countries. This dissertation examines how digital modes of communication contributed to the formation and transformation of political activism or protest politics into social movements and revolutions in the three countries. In order to investigate YouTube's role during Pakistan's political crisis of 2007, and compare it with that platform's role in the 2011 political uprising in Tunisia and Egypt, the study utilized a descriptive visual content analysis of protests-related video clips uploaded during the political unrest of the three countries.

VIDEO SLECETION CRITERIA

In order to assess a YouTube clip as a protest-related video, following criteria were used:

Clips must have the highest number of viewers. For each country under study, 20 "most viewed" clips were selected for the analysis.

Clips must have still or moving images of people protesting against their respective regimes.

Clips must show explicit connection of the protesters to their country (Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt).

Clips must be realistic in nature. In other words, caricatures, comic and/or satirical clips were not entertained as protest-related YouTube clips for this study.

Description of Terminologies Used for this Study

Most viewed Media:

The term "spreadable media" refers to the most circulated and viewed videos on YouTube. Green & Jenkins (2012) introduced the term "spreadable media" as a substitute for "viral videos." According to them, the concept of "spreadable media" helps us understand "what happens when a large number of people make active decisions to pass along an image, song, or bit of video that has taken their fancy to various friends, family members, or large social networks?" (p. 111).

Social Media:

The term "Social Media" refers to the Internet-based human communication that involves audiences as the active producers and disseminators of content online (Burgess & Green, 2010; Green & Jenkins, 2012). Two scholars, Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (p.61). Keeping in perspective these definitions of social media, the dissertation treats "YouTube" as a social media tool, which is very popular among the citizens of Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt.

Social Movements and Protest Politics:

The term "Social Movements" refers to "group actions" in which individuals or organizations join a collective action to achieve a common goal (Olson 1965; Hirschman 1970; Jenkins 1983; Tilly 1994; Tarrow 1998). For this dissertation, however, the term "Social Movements" should be interpreted as "contentious" (Tarrow 1998) political uprisings and mass protests in non-Western settings.

Protesters:

"Protesters" for this dissertation refer to the people appearing in the most-spreadable videos of political protests in the three countries.

Common Man:

The reference to **"Common Man"** should be interpreted as leaderless and unorganized protesters who usually lack monetary and sophisticated resources to sustain their social movements.

Online Political Activists:

"Online Political Activists," for this dissertation, should be interpreted as individuals or groups who are involved in creating and uploading of protest-related YouTube videos. Their identities are usually hidden or they use fake online profiles for anonymity purposes. This study assumes that such individuals and organizations are members of protest movements under investigation.

Comparative Methods:

The term **"Comparative"** in comparative politics itself refers to a methodological choice while dealing with macro units of analysis. A simplified definition of comparative methods would be a study of cross-country, cross cultural or cross-society analysis.

Case Studies

A case study can be defined as the study of a rare historical occurrence, or one that is illustrative of some principle or hypothesis. Accordingly, an intensive study of a relatively bounded topic can be considered to be a case study as long as it can be linked to a larger phenomenon by using a key word. Any case study analysis has two important components: spatial and temporal—thus any comparison using a case study approach is based on either a spatial unit (country) or over a specified time period, such as a day, month, or year.

Cultural & Ideological Frames/Collective Memory

The term "Cultural & Ideological frames" for this study can also be used interchangeably for "Collective Memory" themes, which refers to the common past that members of a community can associate with and refer to. The cultural & ideological frames refer to new but familiar symbols, slogans, themes used by protesters/political activists that resonate with individuals' belief system in order to mobilize them for participating and sustaining a social movement.

Icons of Outrage

"Icons of Outrage" refer to images, still or moving, that become the center of public and political elite's attention because of their uniqueness and impact of people's perceptions. In other words, with regard to visual media, icons of outrage refer to still or moving images that elicit a strong response among the affected public. Thus, icons of outrage have the ability to differentiate ordinary images from the ones that have the tendency to generate public and elite discourse and or upheavals.

APPENDIX B. GUIDELINES AND TERMINOLOGIES

It is required that all the coders follow these guidelines while coding the selected video clips. This will help maintain accurate coding procedures among all the coders. Please don't hesitate to contact the researcher in case something is unclear or needs further explanation. On your coding sheet the terminologies should be interpreted this way:

1-Coder ID
For the coder ID, write **"0"** for the researcher, and **"01"** for the graduate student helping with the inter-coder reliability.

2-Case# Title of Video:_____
Each video has been assigned a specific number from 1 to 60. In addition to these 60 videos, the 12 sample videos for inter-coder reliability were assigned numbers from 61-72. Coders should write the assigned numbers against each video so as to keep track of which video clip is being coded.
Also, write down the complete title that accompanies the video on YouTube. These titles are provided with every YouTube video and can be clicked directly to watch a video.

3-Length of Clip (Minutes & Seconds):_____
The duration of a video clip always appears at the lower-end corner (left side). Coders should note down this duration as minutes and second so as to determine the average length of protest-related videos on YouTube.

4-Number of Times Viewed: _____
The viewership stats are provided by the YouTube at the bottom of each video on the right hand side. Note down the exact number that appears on YouTube for this category.

5-Uploaded by Media Organization

i) Yes
00. No

Yes: If the video clip was uploaded on YouTube by a traditional media source such as a TV network, and newspaper website. The video clip may or may not be produced by the traditional media. This category determines the disseminating source of a video, not the production source.
No: Code as "No" if the source for uploading the video is unclear or is other than the traditional media.

6-Uploaded Date:_____
Coders should take note of the date a video was published/uploaded on YouTube. The published date is provided with each video and can be seen by scrolling down the video clip.

7-Acquisition Date:_____
Coders should provide the date and year when the video was acquired from the YouTube.

8-Mention of Poverty Symbols

01.Yes
00. No

Yes: Direct or indirect references to poverty such as: mention of unemployment, protesters holding/showing/waving bread in their hands, poor living conditions of people, etc. should be coded as "Yes."
No: Code as "No" if there is no mention of poverty.

9-English Subtitles

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Yes: Coders should note if the video content provides English sub-titles.
No: If no subtitles are provided.
N/A: Code for "N/A" if the video is narrated in English language, and no subtitles are provided.

10- Produced

01. Yes
00. No

Produced videos usually contain animated content to a certain extent. Animated content requires certain level of skills that producers of a video utilize to make their productions more dramatic.
Yes: Code as "Yes" if the video has any sort of animated content including graphs, charts, and special effects to make the production more dramatic.
No: The default is "No" if no animated content in the video.

11-Secular Song

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Secular song is popular song such as pop/rock music. The Presence of Secular Song refers to most commonly secular and/or nationalistic – as an overlay with the protest-related videos. Coders should code as **"Yes"** for any kind of Western or non-religious, pop song. The default is **"No."** Code for **"N/A"** if no song is present in the video clip.

12-Hymn Song

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

A 'hymn' is a type of song that praises Allah (God). The Presence of Hymn Song refers to most commonly religious themed songs – as an overlay with the protest-related videos.
Yes: Coders should code "Yes" for any kind of religious song that has references to Islam, Allah, Prophet, Jihad, and other obvious symbols that refer to Islamic spirit.
No: Code as "No" for non-religious song.
N/A: Code for "N/A" if no song is present in the video clip.

13-Total # of Comments

Coders should take note of total number of comments that YouTube provides with each video. The stats regarding these comments can be seen by scrolling down the video clip. Coders should take note if stats are disabled. It is pertinent to mention here that the total number of comments do not require to look at the type/s of language used. Coders just need to look at the stats, not the comments themselves.

14-Total # of Likes

The total number of "likes" to a video clip always appears at the lower-end corner (right hand side) with a thumb mark facing upwards. Coders should note down these numbers.

15-Total # of Dislikes

The total number of "dislikes" to a video clip always appears at the lower-end corner (right hand side) with a thumb mark facing downwards. Coders should note down these numbers.

16-Top Locations: Pakistan

01. Yes
00. No

The YouTube statistics provide information regarding the geographical location where a particular video was viewed the most. For this information, YouTube uses the term, "Top Locations." Coders should take note of these locations by following these guidelines:
Yes: If Pakistan is mentioned as among the top locations by YouTube statistics.
No: The default is "No."

17-Top Locations: Egypt

01. Yes
00. No

(Repeat the same criteria as above)

18-Top Locations: Tunisia

01. Yes
00. No

(Repeat the same criteria as above)

19-Top Locations: Other (*Specify the country*)

Coders should take note of any other country mentioned in the video clips.

20-Top Demographics: Male

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Each YouTube video clip provides statistical data on the demographics regarding who is involved in viewing, commenting and disseminating of a video.
Yes: Code as "Yes" if top demographics are mentioned as male.
No: Code as "No" if top demographics are mentioned as female.
N/A: Code as "N/A" if the stats about demographics are disabled.

21-Top Demographics: Female

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

(Repeat the same criteria as above)

22-Victim Type: NGO

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

The term "NGO" represents individual protesters belonging to non-governmental/ humanitarian organizations. The number of victims from organized groups will help determine the nature of protests: organized protests versus unorganized protests.
Yes: If the victim is specified as a member of humanitarian/ Non-Government Organization (NGO)
No: If the victim's association to a humanitarian/ Non-Government Organization (NGO) is not mentioned.
N/A: If no mention of a victim in the video clip.

23-Victim Type: Military

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Yes: If the victim is specified as a security official/military Personnel. Uniformed individuals usually carrying some sort of weapons are easily recognized as security officials including

police force.
No: If the victim is not associated with the military, police, or law enforcement agencies.
N/A: If no mention of a victim in the video clip.

24-Victim Type: Civilian

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Yes: If the victim is recognized as a common man/civilian/unknown/Protester
No: If victims are specified as belonging to specific organizations including NGOs and security agencies.
N/A: If no mention of a victim in the video clip.

25-Victim Type: Religious Figure

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Yes: If a religious figure, cleric is identified as belonging to some Islamist group or organization.
No: Code as "No" if the victim's connection to a religious group is not mentioned. Coders should avoid using "beard" as the only criteria for attributing someone as religious figure. In most of the Muslim World, men grow beard because of their cultural reasons, which may not have any direct connection to being a Muslim cleric or religious figure.
N/A: If no mention of a victim in the video clip.

26-Victim Type: Government Official

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Yes: Code "Yes" if victims are identified as government official and/or personnel, diplomatic
No: If the victim is not identified as belonging to the government
N/A: If no mention of a victim in the video clip.

27-Victim Gender

01. Male
01. Female
02. Both
09. N/A

01: Coders should code for "01" if victims in the video clips are identified as men
00: Coders should code for "00" if victims in the video clips are identified as women
02: If video clips show both men and women as victims, coders should code for "02"
09: If no victims are shown, code for "09"

28-Victims are specified as being from: Pakistan

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Yes: Coders should only code as "Yes" when the victim's connection to Pakistan is clear. Coders will find it fairly easy to identify victims' connection to their countries because the video clips are organized as three different data sets on the basis of the three countries: Pakistan, Tunisia, and Egypt.
No: If the victim's connection to a country is unclear
N/A: If no victim is shown in the video clip

29-Victims are specified as being from: Egypt

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

(Repeat the same criteria as above)

30-Victims are specified as being from: Tunisia

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

(Repeat the same criteria as above)

31-Production Source of Video: Media Sources [TV, cable, film, newspaper, magazine, etc.]

01. Yes
00. No

The term "Media Sources" refers to the protest-related video produced by professional media organizations such as *Al-Jazeera, CNN, BBC*, etc. For this study, it is important to understand not only the nature of protest-related videos, also the role of traditional media sources in spreading the message of protests during the political crises under investigation.
Yes: If a video clip is produced by a traditional media source such as a TV channel, newspaper website, and film.
No: If the producing source the video clip is other than traditional media organizations, code as "No."

32-Production Source of Video: Amateur

01. Yes
00. No

Amateur: If the source is a private party or some other source not listed here. If someone records a protest video and uploads it under fake name will also be coded as "Yes" under this category. The default is "No."

33-Source of Video: Other *(Specify)*
Coders should take note of who made the video clip, or to whom or what institution was the YouTube clip credited, or where did the clip originate?

34-Presence of Readable Signage
01. Yes
00. No
The term **"signage"** refers to "posters with readable language, placards, letters, documents, signs, and 'legible clothing' (t-shirt, headbands), and architectural signs visible within [video clips] and containing readable words to a speaker of the language. This term is expanded, for comprehensiveness, to cover words appearing cartoons (e.g. dialogue) or maps or charts. (Yes, No). The default is NO "if there is any question of readability" (Perlmutter 1996).

35-Language of Readable Signage: English
01:Yes
00. No
09. N/A
Yes: If English language is used for readable signage, code as "Yes." Remember only readable words by viewers should be coded under this category.
No: Code as "No" if English is not used for the readable signage.
N/A: The default is "N/A" if there is no readable signage in the video clip.

36-Language of Readable Signage: Arabic
01:Yes
00. No
09. N/A
(Repeat the same criteria as above)

37-Language of Readable Signage: Urdu
01:Yes
00. No
09. N/A

38-Language of Readable Signage: French

(Note: Coders should also take note of any other language used for the readable signage.)

39-Mention of Pakistan
01. Yes
00. No
The mention of Pakistan could be in the form of images, text, and vocal.
Yes: Coders should code as "Yes" if the video clip is not about the protests of Pakistan, but provides a clear reference to Pakistan. For example, if the video clip is focused on the protests in Egypt, but provides a reference or example of political protests in Pakistan, should be coded as "Yes."

No: If no reference to Pakistan is made.

40-Mention of Egypt

01. Yes
00. No

(Repeat the same criteria as above)

41-Mention of Tunisia

01. Yes
00. No

(Repeat the same criteria as above)

42-Topic Covered in Video Clip: Domestic (inside country) politics

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Domestic Politics: Political speeches, conferences, meetings, addresses, press conferences, visits, inspections, elections or voting. Example, General Pervez Musharraf gives a speech on TV. (Yes/No). Code for "N/A" if there is no mention of political motives in the video clip.

43-Topic Covered in Video Clip: International Relations & Politics

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

International Relations: Meetings between leaders, peoples of two countries would be interpreted as international relations. Example, President Musharraf meets President Bush. Code for "Yes" if the scope of the video is international. The default is "No." Code for "N/A" if there is no mention of political motives in the video clip.

44-Topic Covered in Video Clip: Media/Journalism

01. Yes
00. No

Media: News industry or news workers, media technology (TV, satellite dishes, print, etc.). Code as "Yes" if the video makes any reference to traditional news media including the demand for media freedom. The default is "No."

45-Topic Covered in Video Clip: Death of an Iconic Figure

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Iconic Figures: For this study, three personalities are treated as iconic figures. They include: Mohammad Bouazizi, the Tunisian street vendor, Khalid Said, the Egyptian man who died of Police torture, and Iftikhar Chaudry, the Pakistan's Chief Justice.
Code as "Yes" if the focus is on some prominent personality's death, either by suicide or

police torture. For example, video content related to the self-immolation of Tunisian man, Mohamed Bouazizi, and the mutilated face of the Egyptian's man, Khalid Said, who died of police torture, should be coded as "Yes." Code as "No" if the video clip shows multiple dead bodies that are hard to determine as "iconic figures." Coders should code as "N/A" if there is no mention of death in the video clip.

46- Topic Covered in Video Clip: Other *(Specify)*
Coders should take note of any other topic covered in the video clips.

47-Presence of Social Dysfunction/Protests

01. Yes
00. No

Perlmutter (1996) describes social dysfunction as "violence" that includes wars, strikes and conflicts involving large number of people.
Yes: Code for presence of social dysfunction that is defined as "violence of any sort, military, criminal, natural or personal, such as any sign of war, riots, looting, death, wounding, heartbreak, deprivation, human misery and suffering, disaster (hunger, flooding, earthquake), social unrest, protests, verbal arguments, or political disputes" (p. 450).
No: If not visible in the video clip, then code: No

48-Type of Social Dysfunction/ Protests

01. Peaceful (Civil unrest/protest/disobedience)
00. Violent (Civil unrest/protest/riot & crackdown, assassinations)

Peaceful Protests: A protest with no one being hurt, but something or someone being protested.
Violent Protests: Large scale riots, looting, street fights involving civilians, but military and police can also be present.

49-Religious Appeal (such as Allah-0-Akber, offering prayers, Quran, etc.)

02. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Religion: Religious, ritual, ceremonial acts or displays. The word "religion" here stands for Islam only. For example, Egyptian Muslims offering prayers at Tahrir Square amidst the protests. A religious appeal for this particular study will refer to Islam. This may include any reference to Allah, the Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), Quran, slogans like "Allah-o-Akbar" and offering prayer. Code as "Yes" if the video clip has appeal for religion and targets Islamist groups. Code as "No" if the video offers appeals other than religious. Code for "N/A" if the appeal of the video clip is hard to establish or unclear.

50-Nationalistic Appeal

00. Yes
01. No
09. N/A

Webster definition: having or showing love and support for one's country – e.g., a *nationalistic* display of the country's flag at all civic events. Keeping in mind this definition, a Nationalistic appeal depicts individuals' direct reference to their particular country, culture and heritage (Pakistan, Tunisia, Egypt). Nationalistic appeals are aimed at portraying protestors as one nation that is united for a cause. (Yes/No). Code for "N/A" if the appeal of the video clip is hard to establish or unclear.

51-Emotional Appeal

02. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

Emotional/Affect appeal "uses heartwarming and/or heartbreaking stories or depict situations that have an emotional impact. This type of appeal either depicts (1) people grieving, (2) suffering, (3) depict families or family life, (4) show images of destruction" (Rutledge 2009) in Pakistan, Egypt and Tunisia-related video clips.

(Repeat the same criteria as above)

Overall theme(s) found: **(your notes as a coder)**

APPENDIX C. CODE BOOK

1-Coder ID

2-Case# Title of video:_____

3-Length of clip (minutes & seconds):_____

4-Number of times viewed: _____

5-Uploaded by Media Organization
ii) Yes
00. No

6-Uploaded date:_____

7-Acquisition date:_____

8-Mention of Poverty Symbols (Unemployment, showing bread, poor living conditions, etc.)
01.Yes
00. No

9-English subtitles
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

10-Produced
01. Yes
00. No

11-Secular Song
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

12-Hymn Song
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

13-Total # of Comments:

14-Total # of Likes:

15-Total # of Dislikes:

16-Top Locations: Pakistan
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

17-Top Locations: Egypt
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

18-Top Locations: Tunisia
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

19-Top Locations: Other (*Specify the country*)

20-Top Demographics: Male
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

21-Top Demographics: Female
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

22-Victim type: NGO
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A
23-Victim type: Military
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A
24-Victim type: Civilian
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A
25-Victim type: Religious figure

01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

26-Victim type: Government official
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

27-Victim gender
02. Male
03. Female
02. Both
09. N/A

28-Victims are specified as being from: Pakistan
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

29-Victims are specified as being from: Egypt
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

30-Victims are specified as being from: Tunisia
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

31-Source of Video: Media sources [TV, cable, film, newspaper, magazine, etc.]
01. Yes
00. No

32-Source of Video: Amateur
01. Yes
00. No

33-Source of Video: Other *(Specify)*

34-Presence of Readable Signage
01. Yes
00. No

35-Language of Readable Signage: English
01:Yes
00. No
09. N/A

36-Language of Readable Signage: Arabic

01:Yes
00. No
09. N/A

37-Language of Readable Signage: Urdu
01:Yes
00. No
09. N/A

38-Language of Readable Signage: French

39-Mention of Pakistan
01. Yes
00. No

40-Mention of Egypt
01. Yes
00. No

41-Mention of Tunisia
01. Yes
00. No

42-Topic Covered in Video Clip: Domestic (inside country) politics
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

43-Topic Covered in Video Clip: International relations & politics
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

44-Topic Covered in Video Clip: Media/Journalism
01. Yes
00. No

45-Topic Covered in Video Clip: Death of an Iconic Figure
01. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

46-Topic Covered in Video Clip: Other *(Specify)*

47-Presence of Social Dysfunction/Protests
01. Yes
00. No

48-Type of Social Dysfunction/ Protests
01. Peaceful (Civil unrest/protest/disobedience)
00. Violent (Civil unrest/protest/riot & crackdown, assassinations)

49-Religious Appeal

04. Yes
00. No
09. N/A

50-Nationalistic Appeal
01. Yes
03. No
09. N/A

51-Emotional Appeal
04. Yes
01. No
09. N/A

Overall theme(s) found: **(your notes as a coder)**

APPENDIX D. SAMPLE CODING FORM

Coder ID								
Case#								
Lenclip								
Userint1								
Userintr2								
Date1								
Date2								
Mpoverty								
VType								
Engsub								
Produced								
SecMusic								
HymMusic								
Comments								
Likes								
Dislikes								
TopLoPA								
TopLoEG								
TopLoTU								
TopLoOT								
TopDeMa								
TopDeFe								
VicTyNGO								
VicTyMil								
VicTyCiv								
VicTyRF								
VicTyGO								
VicGender								
VicPA								
VicEG								
VicTU								
SourceMe								
SourceAM								
SourceNo								
Signage								

SigEng								
SigAra								
SigUrdu								
SigFrench								
MePak								
MeEgypt								
MeTunis								
TopicDP								
TopicIP								
TopicMe								
TopicDe								
TopicNo								
SocialDys								
Potest								
AppRel								
AppNat								
AppEmot								

APPENDIX E. PROTEST VIDEOS

Tunisian Protest Videos

Video ID (1)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omWjoDlS0LE

Video ID (2)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkhXO4VVhUM

Video ID (3)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47d6fyaOjRM

Video ID (4)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z4DNMUtEqyE

Video ID (5)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvlPIpWPEFU

Video ID (6)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUhghN5J6-s

Video ID (7)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Nir6FcXDM8

Video ID (8)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSKZbLr-DOo

Video ID (9)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5yjCy6yXISk

Video ID (10)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lOwKQfQ9d7c

Video ID (11)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cnfHjOASpzQ

Video ID (12)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9mY_GsQZ2w

Video ID (13)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1HNus83vtE

Video ID (14)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0dnOIvxP0g

Video ID (15)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MPmUZssPcU

Video ID (16)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lZyy2197mcY

Video ID (17)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lq_oEXLaEUM

Video ID (18)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EiW4FuVOQRI

Video ID (19)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXNfpJKjKCU

Video ID (20)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6opZoX3BTyI

Egyptian Protest Videos

Video ID (21)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aO06xW0oTKo&feature=youtube_gdata_player

Video ID (22)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4iboFV-yeTE&feature=youtube_gdata_player&bpctr=1358535180

Video ID (23)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgS6s04PpgM

Video ID (24)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9jvL65m6qw

Video ID (25)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThvBJMzmSZI

Video ID (26)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBtYLBQPRGQ

Video ID (27)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w3FQXYdyHCg

Video ID (28)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBvPUBT1rd8

Video ID (29)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4k0_9Y1XaC8&NR=1

Video ID (30)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kWr6MypZ-JU

Video ID (31)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThvBJMzmSZI

Video ID (32)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xWiBCIxjIk

Video ID (33)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcLmi0ZdEpc

Video ID (34)
http://youtu.be/4XnhHzs91MY

Video ID (35)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahCwBBndlVY

Video ID (36)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQD-X9G9xfk

Video ID (37)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHZbZm69PCE

Video ID (38)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqydgpyVNKY&bpctr=1361313262

Video ID (39)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsPBA-bEuEQ&bpctr=1361313410

Video ID (40)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FQHFSfMRxA

Pakistan Protest Videos

Video ID (41)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkwLmDEaIwc&feature=related

Video ID (42)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmppTzPIN3E

Video ID (43)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=fJYp-jPEPgU

Video ID (44)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&feature=endscreen&v=IlL8CA3oG3M

Video ID (45)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=b3NWFVxRDzM

Video ID (46)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=0lt8C-ZDo1k

Video ID (47)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=0uxIUj52sfw

Video ID (48)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QI96hIes0ck

Video ID (49)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=sv7YdFVe2Is

Video ID (50)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=9IyW1SWAxMc

Video ID (51)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=1ldfXTwzrxw

Video ID (52)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=mu6C78hJEWM

Video ID (53)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=BYoIAX5y9rc

Video ID (54)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=OgzPeI0sH5U

Video ID (55)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=nSggM2JygOo

Video ID (56)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=gaZ11PTjpFc

Video ID (57)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=qmVk5myAuMQ

Video ID (58)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=fmppTzPIN3E

Video ID (59)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=lEcd9SwDKIE

Video ID (60)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=aAs_qGbKWkg

APPENDIX F. SAMPLE VIDEOS

Pakistan

Video ID (61)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=qmVk5myAuMQ

Video ID (62) http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=fmppTzPIN3E

Video ID (63)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4Ci9KJAIeE

Video ID (64)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aAs_qGbKWkg

Egypt

Video ID (65) http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=6Czslbh_Bnw

Video ID (66)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=_2VsGQpNnqA

Video ID (67)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThvBJMzmSZI

Video ID (68)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXbRdumboZ0

Tunisia

Video ID (69)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=QxXIoprnu7Q#!

Video ID (70)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=o75PsBIjq6Q

Video ID (71)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=47d6fyaOjRM

Video ID (72)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omWjoDlS0LE

APPENDIX G. SAMPLE TABLE FOR QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Content	Video ___ Country _____
TYPES: Prevalence of types and instances of images/imagery	
SCENE: Locales and environments	
POPULATION: Types of people that appear	
SYMBOLS: Cultural/political/historical references or visualization--symbolism, quotations, slogans	
SITUATIONS: Situations depicted/ Narrative/plotline—what is occurring within videos	
MESSAGES: Overt and implicit communication intentions and persuasive goals.	

APPENDIX H. PREDOMINANT THEMES FOR PAKISTAN

Pakistan	**Predominant Patterns**
Violence	Images of violence. Police beating and torturing protesters.
Urban Settings	All the protests are taking place in urban areas, big cities. Out of 20, 18 videos show protests taking place in the federal capital, Islamabad, in front of the President house. This street is historically known as "Constitution Avenue" where most of the protests and violent interactions between security forces and protesters took place.
Youth	All the videos showed a majority of protesters were young male and females. Sometimes children were also shown protesting in the videos.
Religious Islamic symbols and slogans	Most of the videos showed Islamic symbols, Islamic slogans and Islamic calligraphy as a part of protests
Pakistani flag	Protesters were shown carrying Pakistani flag as if their protests are aimed at protesting the country from enemies.
Anti-Musharraf Slogans	The videos were full of slogans written and spoken ones against dictatorship
Emotional Appeal	The dominant narrative of all the videos is to sympathize with the protesters, and support their movement against the powerful elites
Message of resistance, "Voice"	All the videos portray Musharraf and his forces as bad guys and the protesters are shown as heroes who have decided to resist against the tyranny of regime.
Raw Footage	Most of the videos are based on raw footage of someone's cellphone recordings
Men facing guns	Several images where men are intentionally facing guns to challenge the security forces
Chief justice as icon of struggle and hero	Iftikhar Chaudry, the deposed CJ is shown in several videos being humiliated by the forces, but stands up to his principles.
English Language	The use of English language is extremely visible and audible in these videos when protesters are chanting their slogans and holding placards

APPENDIX I. PREDOMINANT THEMES FOR TUNISIA

Tunisia	**Predominant Patterns**
Violence	Images of Bouazizi's self-immolation. Images of violence. Police beating and torturing protesters, funerals, people are dying because of police firing, blood, destruction
Urban Settings: Tunis near Presidential palace, and Sidi Bouzid where Bouazizi committed suicide	Most of the protests are taking place in Tunis, near presidential palace. Some videos show protests in Sidi Bouzid as well.
Youth	All the videos showed a majority of protesters were young male and females. Sometimes children were also shown protesting in the videos. All who died of police brutality were young males.
Religious Islamic symbols and slogans	People praying. Most of the videos showed Islamic symbols, Islamic slogans and Islamic calligraphy as a part of protests
Tunisian flag	Protesters were shown carrying and kissing Tunisian flag as if their protests.
Anti-regime Slogans	The videos were full of slogans written and spoken ones against dictatorship
Emotional Appeal	The dominant narrative of all the videos is to sympathize with the protesters, and support their movement against the powerful elites
Message of resistance, "Voice"	All the videos portray President Ben Ali and his forces as bad guys and the protesters are shown as heroes who have decided to resist against the tyranny of regime.
Raw Footage	Most of the videos are based on raw footage of someone's cellphone recordings. People recording on the scene are also visible in these videos
Men facing Tanks	Several images where men are intentionally facing tanks to challenge the security forces
Bouazizi as icon of struggle and heroism	Images of self immolation when Bouaziz is setting himself on fire are shown in several videos
English Language	The use of English language is extremely visible and audible in these videos when protesters are chanting their slogans and holding placards

APPENDIX J. PREDOMINANT THEMES FOR EGYPT

Egypt	**Predominant Patterns**
Violence	Images of violence. Police beating and torturing protesters, funerals, people are dying because of police firing, blood, destruction
Urban Settings: Tahrir Square	All the protests are taking place in Cairo, at Tahrir Square. Videos show protests taking place near and in front of the President Mubarak residence. This place is historically known as "Freedom Square" where most of the protests and violent interactions between security forces and protesters took place.
Youth	All the videos showed a majority of protesters were young male and females. Sometimes children were also shown protesting in the videos. All, except one, who died of police brutality, were young males.
Religious Islamic symbols and slogans	People praying at Tahrir Square. Most of the videos showed Islamic symbols, Islamic slogans and Islamic calligraphy as a part of protests
Egyptian flag	Protesters were shown carrying and kissing Egyptian flag as if their protests are aimed at protecting the country from Mubarak regime.
Anti-regime Slogans	The videos were full of slogans written and spoken ones against dictatorship
Emotional Appeal	The dominant narrative of all the videos is to sympathize with the protesters, and support their movement against the powerful elites
Message of resistance, "Voice"	All the videos portray Mubarak and his forces as bad guys and the protesters are shown as heroes who have decided to resist against the tyranny of regime.
Raw Footage	Most of the videos are based on raw footage of someone's cellphone recordings. People recording on the scene are also visible in these videos
Men facing guns	Several images where men are intentionally facing tanks to challenge the security forces
Khalid Said as icon of struggle and heroism	Torture disfigured face of Khalid Said is shown in several videos
English Language	The use of English language is extremely visible and audible in these videos when protesters are chanting their slogans and holding placards

APPENDIX K. COMMON THEMES PAKISTAN, TUNISIA, EGYPT

Common Themes in the three countries	**Unique Themes**
Violent imagery	For Tunisia and Egypt: Military joining and hugging protesters. No such thing for Pakistan
Epicenter of the protests: Urban Settings for all the protests	
Youth (both men and women) as a dominant theme	
Islamic symbols and chants in the three countries	
Nationalistic symbols such as national flags, nationalistic songs and music	
Protesters targeting their struggle against dictatorship, demand for regime change	
Emotional appeal to sympathize with protesters	
Message of Resistance "Voice"	
Raw Footage for most of the videos	
Protesters facing tanks/guns just like the Tiananmen square image of China	
Presence of English as a language of communication along with their national languages	
Iconic figures: Iftikhar Chaudry for Pakistan, Khalid Said for Egypt, and Bouazizi for Tunisia	